PROBLEMS OF COMMUNISM

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THE AGRICULTURAL SCENE

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Ideological Limits / *Janos Horvath*

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KHRUSHCHEV'S FALL AND AFTER: II

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The Vocabulary of Indonesian Communism

By Justus van der Kroef

Perhaps the principal factor which has enabled the Communist Party of Indonesia (*Partai Komunis Indonesia*, or PKI) to become the second largest in Asia and one of the two or three most influential Communist parties outside the bloc has been the skillful blending of its program and tactical objectives with the rationales of Indonesian nationalism. Since 1948, when the PKI almost destroyed itself in a coup against the new revolutionary Indonesian government, the party has sought to develop its ideology in close concert with Indonesian nationalist notions until it now can claim to be a major, and perhaps even determining, force in the development and articulation of official Indonesian policy.[1] The present article will attempt to describe the more important concepts now current in PKI theory and ideology and to place them in the context of the announced political objectives of the Indonesian government.

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People's Democracy

According to the most recent program and constitution of the PKI, adopted at the Seventh (Special) National Party Congress in April 1962, the party's objective is the establishment of a "people's democratic state" or a "government of people's democracy," which will be based on the masses, particularly on an alliance

[1] For a fuller treatment of this subject, see the author's *The Communist Party of Indonesia: Its History, Program and Tactics*, Vancouver, B.C., University of British Columbia Publications Center, 1965, especially Chapters IV and VII.

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of workers and peasants, and will have as its aim "complete national independence." This government is to be led by "the working class" but will not represent "the power" or "dictatorship" of "the proletariat." Instead, it will represent the "power of the people" and will be charged with carrying out "democratic" rather than "socialist" reforms—*e.g.*, redistributing land "free of charge" to the peasants, guaranteeing "democratic rights" to the people, encouraging "national" trade and industry, eliminating unemployment, and improving the material well-being of the workers. These "democratic" reforms are expected, however, to shade gradually into more and more avowedly socialistic measures as "people's democracy" stabilizes itself. "People's democracy" is also described as "democracy of a new type" which will be able to win the support not only of the "millions of workers and the tens of millions of peasants," but also of "the urban petty bourgeoisie, the intellectuals, the national bourgeoisie, the advanced aristocratic elements, and patriotic elements in general." [2]

It should be noted here that since 1960, when the party was required to adapt itself to new presidential regulations governing the programs and activities of all political parties in Indonesia, the term "dictatorship" *(diktatur)* has all but vanished from the approved political vocabulary of the PKI. Prior to that time, PKI literature had freely used the term, although the party's goal was said to be a "government of the dictatorship of the *people*" (*pemerintah diktatur rakjat)* rather than a "dictatorship of the *proletariat*" (*diktatur proletariat*).[3] Since 1960, however, the word *diktatur* has tended to disappear from party usage. Recent PKI documents refer to the "authority" or "power" *(kekuasaan)* of "the people": thus, for example, the 1962 party constitution envisages the establishment of *kekuasaan rakjat* (the power of the people), in evident preference to either *diktatur* or *kekuasaan proletariat*. Interestingly enough, the party program adopted simultaneously with the constitution does use the term *diktatur proletariat* at one point, but it refers to it in contrast with *kekuasaan rakjat* as if to emphasize that the "power of the people" which the PKI seeks to establish is in no way comparable to the traditional Marxist-Leninist "dictatorship of the proletariat." [4] This semantic distinction is undoubtedly designed to show compliance with official demands that all Indonesian political parties stay within the limits of a broad, officially-approved, national ideological spectrum.

The party's concept of "people's democracy" reflects the same ideological flexibility. Like Mao Tse-tung's "New Democracy," [5] it is meant to encompass the whole process of transformation of an underdeveloped country, first from "colonial" (or "semi-colonial") and "semi-feudal" conditions to a permissible kind of capitalistic development, and thence to socialism—this process to be guided by "all revolutionary classes" in jointly-held political authority. The concept thus has particular significance in the context of the characteristic socio-economic structure of the new countries, envisaging both a path of economic development leading toward an eventual socialist system and the political changes rendered necessary by this development. Radical nationalism, which arises more often than not against a background of economic stagnation, tends to impart driving force to the concept of "people's democracy": thus, for example, the first significant tactical use of this slogan by the PKI dates from the period 1953-55, when a realignment of the Indonesian political parties and a climate of growing hostility toward foreign capital began to alter deeply the complexion of Indonesian political life.

As an action program, "people's democracy" demands nothing—at least in its initial stages—which could not be endorsed by the more radical nationalist, non-Communist elements in the country. As already indicated, the concept is meant to convey renunciation of the specifically Marxist goal of "proletarian dictatorship" in favor of a government representing the "power of the people." Yet the formula of "people's democracy" is flexible enough to permit the PKI to water down its professed political objectives even further, as it did in 1955 by proclaiming its advocacy of a kind of national coalition and contenting itself to pursue only limited aims under a non-Communist government.

An important part of this national coalition strategy has been the party's policy of recog-

[2] See the 1962 party program and constitution in *Madju Terus! Dokumen-dokumen Kongres Nasional ke-VII (Luarbiasa) Partai Komunis Indonesia, Djakarta 25-30 April 1962*, Djakarta, Jajasan Pembaruan, 1963, pp. 317, 344-46.

[3] *E.g.*, see the 1954 party program in *Kepartaian dan Parlementaria Indonesia*, Djakarta, Kementarian Penerangan, 1954, p. 493, and in *Programme of the Communist Party of Indonesia*, Djakarta, Agitprop Department of the PKI, 1954, p. 4; also, the 1959 party program in *Materials of the Sixth National Congress of the Communist Party of Indonesia*, Djakarta, Agitprop Department of the PKI, 1959, pp. 91-92, 108.

[4] *Madju Terus! . . ., op. cit.*, pp. 317, 345.

[5] Mao Tse-tung, *On New Democracy*, Peking, Foreign Languages Press, 1954, p. 12.

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nizing ethnic and racial differences in a country where these differences present a difficult problem (just as the "nationalities" question once bedeviled Lenin and the early Comintern), while at the same time condemning—with varying degrees of emphasis depending on the circumstances—ethnic exclusiveness and racist "chauvinism." [6] The latter approach, in particular, is designed to appeal to the Indonesian Chinese, long the target of ethnic hostility, whom the PKI is anxious to bring into its ranks.

Bourgeois Democracy and National Democracy

Particularly since the time of Lenin and the early directives of the Comintern to the Marxist movements in Asia, Communist theoreticians have stressed the concept of a phased revolutionary process leading toward the eventual "Communization" of colonial and "semi-colonial" countries. Each successive phase is said to mark a stage of transition from the "exploitative" hold of international capitalism on the particular country's national resources, and from the political and social dependencies connected with this exploitation, toward full national independence and a more equitable economic development. This process may be said to enter its latter stages with the attainment of a "government of people's democracy" led by the "working class" but with "power" jointly shared by "the people." From here the road leads, under the increasing direction of the Communist Party, to socialism and, finally, to communism. But in order to reach the phase of "people's democratic revolution," certain preliminary revolutionary processes must be accelerated. "Bourgeois democratic revolution" and "national democratic revolution" are the standard terms now used by PKI theorists to designate these processes.

Not only must the "bourgeois democratic" and "national democratic" revolutions precede the "people's democratic revolution" (as contemporary Soviet theory also holds [7]), but by implication they cannot provide the base from which the development toward socialism can begin. D. N. Aidit, the top leader and chief theoretician of the PKI, fully subscribes to this position: he has argued that, in the present "national democratic" stage of the Indonesian revolution, no significant steps can yet be taken toward socialism, and that such steps can be initiated only when the national democratic revolution has been successfully completed.[8] It is curious to note, however, that Aidit has on occasion taken a seemingly contradictory tack implying that in Indonesia the "bourgeois democratic," "national democratic," and "people's democratic" stages of revolution are synonymous—probably reflecting the influence of Maoist thought. For example, he has virtually echoed Mao in asserting that the "bourgeois democratic" revolution in Indonesia is of "a new type" which can also be called "the new democratic revolution" or the "revolution of people's democracy." [9]

It should also be noted that, in the past five years or so, Aidit and other Indonesian Communist leaders have shown a marked preference for the term "national democracy," whereas they previously had used "bourgeois democracy" exclusively. The latter has by no means been disavowed, however, and it is evident that both terms are taken today to mean the same thing and are used interchangeably.[10] The recent preference for "national democracy" probably stems mainly from the desire to place special emphasis on the applicability of the phased revolutionary process to new nation-states where the force of nationalism can be utilized to unite diverse social classes behind a program of "progressive" reform. Aidit sees a continuing need for such unity even after the national democratic phase of Indonesia's revolution has been completed. As he put it in an interview last year,[11]

When we complete the first stage of our revolution which is now in progress, we can enter

[6] In this connection, *cf.* M. H. Lukman, *Tentang Front Persuatan Nasional*, Djakarta, Jajasan Pembaruan, 1960, pp. 41-53, and *Untuk Perbaikan Pekerdjaan Front Persuatan Nasional*, same publisher, 1964, pp. 30-38.

[7] Institute for the Study of the USSR (Munich), *Bulletin*, Aug. 1961, p. 8, citing *Malaia sovetskaia entsiklopedia*, 3rd ed. 1958, Vol. 2, p. 33.

[8] D. N. Aidit, *Peladjaran dari Sedjarah PKI*, Djakarta, Jajasan Pembaruan, 1960, pp. 24-25, and *Pilihan Tulisan*, same publisher, 1960, Vol. II, pp. 299-300.

[9] Aidit, *Masjarakat Indonesia dan Revolusi Indonesia*, 6th ed., Djakarta, Jajasan Pembaruan, 1964, p. 55. *Cf.* Mao Tse-tung, *On People's Democratic Dictatorship*, Peking, Foreign Languages Press, 1959, esp. p. 15.

[10] In his *Masjarakat Indonesia dan Revolusi Indonesia*, originally published in 1958, Aidit exclusively used the term "bourgeois democratic revolution," and this term was retained in the 6th edition of 1964 (cited above). However, speaking in Peking in September 1964, he used only "national democratic," describing the Indonesian revolution as having two stages, "the national democratic stage and the socialist stage." (See the essay "Revolusi Indonesia dan Tugas-Tugas Mendesak PKI," in Aidit, *Kibarkan Tinggi Pandji Revolusi*, Djakarta, Jajasan Pembaruan, 1964, p. 31.) See also Aidit, *Revolusi Indonesia, Latarbelakang Sedjarah dan Haridepannja*, Djakarta, Pembaruan, 1964, pp. 77-78.

[11] *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Apr. 16, 1964, p. 156.

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into friendly consultation (mushawara) *with other progressive elements in our society and, without an armed struggle, lead the country toward socialist revolution. After all, the national capitalists in our country are both weak and disorganized. At present, in our national democratic revolution, we are siding with them and fighting a common battle of expelling foreign economic domination from this soil.*

The idea of continuing collaboration with other "progressive" elements is, as this statement indicates, an essential part of the PKI's current position on the whole question of using violence to effect the transition from "national democracy" to "people's democracy" and socialism. It is significant that the party's earlier pronouncements on this subject tended to be somewhat more aggressive than those of today. For example, the party constitution and program approved at the PKI's Sixth National Congress in 1959 recognized the preferability of a peaceful "parliamentary course" to "people's democracy" but emphasized that the possibility of such a non-violent transition was not up to the PKI alone and that past "experience" showed the "imperialists" and "feudal landlords" to be reluctant to submit peacefully. Thus, the party implicitly acknowledged that a violent course of action might have to be taken, and accordingly the 1959 constitution stressed that the party engages not merely in parliamentary activity but also in "arousing" and "mobilizing" the masses.

By 1960, however, all Indonesian political parties were required by presidential decree to subscribe to the principle of pursuing their goals solely by peaceful means. Consequently, the new party program and constitution approved at the Special Party Congress in 1962, while retaining a warning about "imperialist" resistance to peaceful transition, sought to play down the whole issue of a recourse to violence by making general references to the party's devotion to peaceful and democratic procedures, Pantjasila, and the Political Manifesto. Thus, at least for the present, the party appears to be basing its official policy on the estimation that it can successfully advance its aims by a peaceful, gradualist approach. In implementing this approach, PKI leaders have alternately emphasized the party's intention to act—within the limits of legality—in support of the desired transformation of society ("social support"), and its readiness to submit to governmental supervision ("social control").[12]

The August Revolution

Indicative of the PKI's tactic of close identification with the symbols of Indonesian nationalism is the party's use of the term "August Revolution." This refers to the revolutionary struggle against the Dutch which began after the August 1945 declaration of Indonesian independence. PKI ideological propaganda has skillfully sought to link the idea of the August revolution with the party's own concepts of "national democracy" and "people's democracy." For example, the present party program declares that only the eventual establishment of a "people's democratic state" will conform with "the characteristics of the August 1945 revolution," which "drew up the tasks of national independence and democratic reform for the Indonesian people" (*i.e.*, fixed the reforms to be carried out during the phase of national democracy). During the "people's revolution" of 1945-1948, the program states, the Indonesian masses undertook such anti-imperialist measures as transforming foreign-owned enterprises into "property of the Republic of Indonesia," establishing "Indonesian National Committees" and "people's security agencies" (*i.e.*, paramilitary village "guards"), and redistributing the land of foreign estates in some areas to the peasants.[13]

According to party theory, however, the August revolution ended prematurely. "Provocations" against the Communists, the "Round Table Agreements" with the Netherlands resulting in the continuation of Dutch "imperialistic" influence, and the abrogation of "revolutionary achievements" by "reactionary" Indonesian governments all tended to nullify the significance of the popular struggle. The citation of "provocations" against the Communists has reference to the suppression of the attempted Communist coup d'état in September 1948 which resulted in the virtual, if temporary, demise of the party. Thus, while most historians view the Indonesian Revolution as covering the period 1945-49, ending with the transfer of sovereignty to the federal Indonesian Republic at the Round Table Conference at the Hague

[12] Compare *Materials of the Sixth National Congress*, *op. cit.*, pp. 97 and 111, with *Madju Terus! . . .*, *op. cit.*, pp. 319 and 350. On the meaning of "social support" and "social control" in the context of PKI strategy, see Aidit, *Angkatan Bersendjata dan Penjesuaian Kekuasaan Negara dengan Tugas-Tugas Revolusi*, Djakarta, Jajasan Pembaruan, 1964, *passim*.

[13] *Madju Terus! . . .*, *op. cit.*, pp. 341, 345.

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in December 1949, the PKI does not include the year 1948-49 in the revolutionary era at all, but rather considers it a period in which the achievements of the August revolution were largely swept aside. Since then, with the gradual revival of the party's strength, its announced aim has been to recapture the dynamics of the August revolution. Indonesia's subsequent repudiation of the Round Table Agreements and of the federal state structure has helped the PKI effort to portray the 1948-49 period as an interlude of retrogression from earlier revolutionary ideals. And this, in turn, has assisted the party in its endeavor to free itself of the still lingering stigma of having attempted a coup at a time when other Indonesians were fighting against the Dutch for national freedom.

Over and over, PKI pronouncements have stressed that the August revolution "met with defeat" because the party was inexperienced in united front tactics and "matters of armed struggle," because the "millions of peasants were not aroused and drawn into the struggle," and so on.[14] The "unfinished August 1945 revolution" has thus become an article of faith for the party, which defines its present tasks in terms of completing that revolution:

Firstly, under the slogans "Fulfill the demands of the August Revolution in their entirety," we carry to completion the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution; secondly, after this first undertaking has been carried out, we carry to completion the tasks of the revolution which is proletarian-socialist in nature.[15]

In this fashion, the PKI has equated Indonesia's revolution against the Dutch with its own concept of the bourgeois-democratic or national-democratic phase of revolutionary development, the prelude to "people's democracy."

Another example of Communist exploitation of official Indonesian symbols is the party's adoption of the terms *gotong royong* and *Nasakom*. The first refers to certain forms of mutual assistance and cooperative endeavor which were at one time characteristic of traditional Indonesian village society. These have long since eroded or disappeared in many areas, but as a political abstraction the concept has figured prominently in Sukarno's own ideology. According to Sukarno, the principles of "Pantjasila," which embody the official ideology of the state, can be summed up in the single concept of *gotong royong:* the Indonesians should establish "a *gotong royong* state," and "the identity of the Indonesian nation is *gotong royong*." [16]

In 1957, in the midst of a political crisis, Sukarno invoked the term in a way that made it especially important to the PKI: that is, as a symbol of unity and cooperation among all major political forces in the country, particularly in relation to the formation of a new government—a *gotong royong* cabinet in which the Communists would participate. It is in this specific sense that the term has been useful to the party in backing up its demands for a national coalition government. Amidst another political crisis in 1960, Sukarno buttressed this interpretation of *gotong royong* by coining still another verbal symbol, *i.e., Nasakom,* an acrostic composed of the first syllables of the Indonesian words for nationalism (nasionalisme), religion (agama), and communism (komunisme), and signifying the unity of the three main currents in Indonesian politics. This has equally served Communist purposes.

Especially since 1960, the terms *gotong royong* and *Nasakom* have appeared with increasing frequency in PKI literature, and the party has at times used them defensively, at other times offensively, depending upon the tactical exigencies of the moment. "Defensive" use of the terms was evident in 1960-61, when the party was under a cloud because of its vociferous criticism of government policies and rumors of an anti-Communist military coup were current in the capital. In that period Aidit urged his followers to fly the banner of "cooperation between the Moslem, National and Communist trends," and the party Politburo, on September 4, 1960, issued a statement calling it clear "that anti-Communist actions taken by anyone, whatever the form may be, are contrary to the broad lines of the state policy of

[14] *E.g.,* see Aidit, *A Short History of the Communist Party of Indonesia,* New Delhi, People's Publishing House, 1955, p. 34, and *Peladjaran dari Sedjarah PKI, op. cit.,* pp. 11-12; also (1954) *Programme . . ., op. cit.,* p. 2, and *Materials of the Sixth National Congress, op. cit.,* pp. 109-10. Contemporary PKI theory, reflecting particular concern with the projection of a "Leninist" image, stresses that revolutions in the underdeveloped world similar to the 1945-48 "August Revolution" in Indonesia, cannot succeed without significant peasant support. (See, *e.g.,* Aidit, "Lenin dan Revolusi Nasion-Nasion Tertindas," *Bintang Merah,* April-May 1964, p. 11.

[15] M. H. Lukman, in *Bintang Merah,* March 1964, p. 5. See also Aidit, *Pilihan Tulisan, op. cit.,* Vol. II, pp. 299-300; and Agitprop Department, PKI Central Committee, *ABC Politik,* Djakarta, Pembaruan, 1964, p. 27.

[16] See Ministry of Information, *"Lahirnja Pantjasila" —An Outline of the Five Principles of the Indonesian State,* Djakarta, 1952, p. 30; also Department of Information, *Political Manifesto, Republic of Indonesia, of 17th August 1959,* Djakarta, 1959, p. 74.

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the Republic of Indonesia (*i.e., Nasakom*) and are an act of hostility against one of the major groups of the Indonesian people." [17] In the following months, party pronouncements—echoing similar exhortations by Sukarno himself—repeatedly called on all Indonesians "to prevent every split in national unity" and to resist "*Nasakom*-phobia and Communist-phobia."

By the end of 1962, however, the party was no longer on the defensive. With Indonesia's new "confrontation" campaign against Malaysia gathering momentum—a campaign in which the PKI had taken the lead even before the government made it the official national policy—the party launched a political offensive under the twin banners of *gotong royong* and *Nasakom*. Capitalizing on a mass mobilization drive initiated by the Sukarno regime, the PKI intensified its demand for a full-fledged coalition government in which the Communists would have real representation, and the phrase *kabinet gotong royong berporaskan Nasakom* ("a *gotong royong* cabinet with *Nasakom* as its axis"), became the party's standard rallying cry.[18] Aidit fired the opening round of the political offensive at a mass rally in Bandung on December 16, 1962. Calling for a "*gotong royong* cabinet with *Nasakom* as its axis," he empasized however that this did not mean a fusion or obliteration of the separate political parties, but meant rather their cooperation in a common political effort. (Obviously, a *gotong royong* government must not be allowed to restrict the PKI's freedom of action.) "Let life in Indonesia flourish like the many-colored flowers of a beautiful garden," Aidit concluded, with an obvious bow to Mao.[19]

Army opposition to the PKI demand continued overwhelmingly strong, however, and by the middle of 1963 it was apparent that the augmentation of Communist representation in the government would be a protracted and gradual process. Early in 1963, while still stressing the advantages of a *Nasakom* cabinet, the party cautioned that even if this were realized, it would not be an "Aladdin's lamp" and conditions could not be expected to improve immediately.[20] Nevertheless, the party has continued to identify itself with Sukarno's pronouncements on the desirability of *Nasakom* and *gotong royong*, thus seeking to impart a nationalist aura to its objective of a coalition government including the Communists.[21]

At the same time, the PKI has not hesitated, whenever it felt strong enough, to press with its own interpretations against the limits set by the official Indonesian state philosophy. For example, during a visit to Peking in September 1962, Aidit declared in an address to the Chinese Communist Higher Party School that while the PKI program had certain elements in common with the Political Manifesto of the Indonesian Republic (to which all Indonesian political parties are officially required to subscribe), there were also "certain differences." The Political Manifesto, he said, "is the common program of *all* the Indonesian people to carry through the Indonesian revolution"—that is, a program involving cooperation with other classes—whereas the PKI program is one for carrying through the revolution of the working class. In other words the party demands that leadership of the revolution "be in the hands of the working class." [22] This might well be interpreted as contradicting the party's professed intention—stated in its own program—to strive for a state based on "the power of the people," *i.e.*, a state based on the leadership concept of the Political Manifesto, which the PKI has officially accepted.

Such contradictions can perhaps be considered as falling within the esoteric dimensions of theory—soluble, if occasion demands, by a new dialectical exercise. However, this was far from true of Aidit's controversial interpretation, voiced in October 1964, of the role of Pantjasila. Addressing a "Revolutionary Cadre Course Committee" (not a party organization) meeting in Djakarta, the PKI leader declared that, for the party, Pantjasila was but "a unifying tool" which was needed at present, but

[17] Aidit, "For a More Consistent Implementation of the Political Manifesto," *Review of Indonesia*, Aug. 1960, p. 39; for Politburo statement, see *ibid.*, Sept.-Oct. 1960, p. 4. (The *Review of Indonesia* is an English-language organ of the PKI.)

[18] In March 1962 Sukarno conferred ministerial rank on Aidit and Lukman in their respective capacities as vice-chairman of the People's Consultative Congress and speaker of Parliament, but these were among a number of similar appointments made simultaneously, and they carried with them no real ministerial power. Aidit and Lukman were reconfirmed in these posts at the time of the cabinet reshuffle in August 1964, while PKI second deputy chairman Njoto was also appointed a minister seconded to the cabinet presidium—a not insignificant post but still not involving policy-making authority.

[19] Antara Daily News Bulletin, Dec. 28, 1962.

[20] Aidit, *Berani, Berani, Sekali Lagi Berani*, Djakarta, Pembaruan, 1963, p. 40.

[21] *E.g.*, see Aidit, *Revolusi, Angkatan Bersendjata & Partai Komunis*, Djakarta, Jajasan Pembaruan, 1964, pp. 12-15, and *Kobarkan Semangat Banteng! Madju Terus, Pantang Mundur!* same publisher, 1964, pp. 88-89.

[22] See Aidit, *Kibarkan Tinggi Pandji Revolusi*, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-32, and article in *Ilmu Marxis*, No. 1, 1964, p. 32.

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which would no longer be necessary once unity had been achieved. This statement evoked a sharp reaction, with various political groups protesting that Pantjasila, as the basis of Indonesian national development, had an enduring quality extending beyond the achievement of national unity, while others viewed Aidit's remark as proof that the PKI had never really accepted Pantjasila as its guide (as all political parties had been required to do).[23] There also were reports that the incident had accentuated a split in the PKI leadership, with the party's second deputy chairman, Njoto, becoming the informal head of a faction arrayed against Aidit and his supporters.[24]

The affair finally blew over after reassuring statements by Foreign Minister Subandrio and chief security officials, but it did not escape the attention of political observers that Aidit's *faux pas* had culminated a months-long "muscle-flexing" campaign by various PKI front groups directed against the importation of American films and U.S. Information Service materials and demanding implementation of the government's land reform law.[25] There is little doubt that Aidit's occasional ideological militancy is an integral part of this "muscle-flexing," the purpose of which is to bring about a gradual radicalization of Indonesian political life. In 1962, when the PKI had recently been under severe attack, it tended to soft-pedal its demands and to lean heavily on Sukarno's concepts and Sukarno's interpretation of *Nasakom;* today, with the party in a new period of aggressive ascendancy, one hears Aidit openly declare that it was Lenin who first conceived the idea of *Nasakom* "long before it was spoken of" in Indonesia.[26]

Back to Dekon

On March 28, 1963, Sukarno issued a vaguely-worded *Deklarasi Ekonomi* (Economic Declaration), which acrostic-minded Indonesians soon began to speak of as *Dekon.* In line with its usual policy of trying to turn the Indonesian leader's ideological pronouncements to its own political advantage, the PKI promptly adopted *Dekon* as its theoretical model for national economic development, interpreting it in such manner as to support the party's objectives. In a lecture before the Indonesian Scholars' Association *(Himpunan Jardjana Indonesia),* an influential party front for intellectuals, Aidit, with his usual skill, wove out of *Dekon's* phrases an "anti-imperialist" and "anti-feudal" policy which would give Indonesia a "national democratic" economic structure. As elaborated by Aidit, this policy called for halting credits and technical assistance from "imperialist" sources (particularly from the United States); a reorientation of Indonesian trade favoring the "newly emerging forces" (Sukarno's term for the more radical new nations of the underdeveloped world); intensified implementation of land reform measures; recognition of a "patriotic" sector of "national capitalists"; creation of a buffer rice reserve to be held by the government; steps to effect vast increases in agricultural and mining production, and so on.[27]

Economic developments during 1963 were tactically advantageous to the PKI. The current trade and financial policies of the government, as exemplified in the reforms of May 26, 1963, were generally oriented towards "free market" principles in conjunction with plans for a long-range stabilization program to be underwritten by the United States and certain other Western powers. These plans failed of implementation, however, largely because of Indonesia's intransigeance towards Malaysia, resulting in a serious aggravation of inflationary conditions. At the same time, new Indonesian negotiations for an $82 million loan from the International Monetary Fund aroused concern in both Communist and non-Communist circles.

The PKI saw in the May 26, 1963, "deviation" —as it preferred to call the government monetary reforms—a favorable opportunity to attack the entire existing Indonesian external trade policy, under which the United States and other major Western powers continued to be the chief outlets of Indonesian exports, as well as the government's evident readiness to accept long-range Western stabilization assistance. Under the slogan *"Kembali ke Dekon"* (Back to *Dekon*), PKI economic spokesmen set to work belaboring the alleged dangers of the reforms (which, with the non-materialization of Western assistance, were virtually repealed by the end of 1963) and at the same time outlined the

[23] *Indonesian Observer* (Djakarta), Oct. 21-23, 28 and 30, 1964. For the PKI's version of the affair, see Aidit, *Membela Pantjasila,* Djakarta, Jajasan Pembaruan, 1964, *passim.*

[24] *Indonesian Observer,* Oct. 24, 1964; *Minggu Berita Indonesia* (Djakarta), Oct. 24, 1964.

[25] For futher details, see the author's article, "Indonesian Communism's 'Revolutionary Gymnastics'," in *Asian Survey,* May 1965.

[26] *E.g.,* compare Aidit, *Setudju Manipol harus Setudju Nasakom!* Djakarta, Depagitprop CC PKI, 1962, pp. 55-58 and *passim,* with *Indonesian Observer,* Feb. 15, 1965.

[27] *Harian Rakjat* (Djakarta), May 14-17, 20 and 21, 1963.

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party's prescription for a systematic economic development program. Though often couched in vague and broad generalizations, some aspects of the party's critique of current official policies and its analysis of economic problems (*e.g.*, the operational weaknesses of state-owned enterprises, the incompetence of the government statistical services, and shortcomings in the implementation of agrarian reform) have had considerable substance.[28] Even so, the "back to *Dekon*" slogan has served the party primarily as a cover for pressing specific tactical economic demands: *e.g.*, minimization of the influence of Western private capital; progressive expropriation of foreign privately-owned estates and mining enterprises; acceleration of land reform measures and expropriation of "landlords"; establishment of syndicalist-style "workers' councils" in enterprises; more stringent state controls over rice production and distribution; etc.

The Revolution of Southeast Asia

Perhaps the most significant addition to the PKI's vocabulary in recent years—not only because of what it reveals concerning the party's stance in relation to the Sino-Soviet ideological conflict, but also because of the influence it exerts on official Indonesian foreign policy today—is the term *revolusi Asia Tenggara*, or the "revolution of South Asia" (actually meaning Southeast Asia). In accord with the Chinese Communist line, and contrary to the Soviet approach,[29] the PKI considers the underdeveloped areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America (particularly Asia) to be the main "storm centers of world revolution," where the "contradictions" of "imperialism" are presently most severe. On September 29, 1963, just after returning from a tour of Communist countries that had taken him to Cuba, the Soviet Union, East Germany, North Korea, and People's China, Aidit declared that Asia in general, and particularly Southeast Asia, had become the scene of "the most acute anti-imperialist struggle." "Conditions, both objective and subjective," are highly favorable to revolution in Southeast Asia, he said, and Indonesian revolutionaries should feel fortunate to be living in the heartland of the struggle against world imperialism.[30]

Shortly afterward, a plenary session of the PKI Central Committee, meeting in Djakarta at the end of December 1963, adopted a resolution which singled out Southeast Asia as one of the most promising arenas of the world revolutionary struggle, since imperialism had already been overthrown in some parts of the area and the people had attained a "high level of political vigilance" as well as experience in revolutionary action. The resolution went on to state that conditions in Southeast Asia were steadily becoming more favorable for advancing the revolutionary struggle, in which the Indonesian Communists shouldered a "tremendous responsibility." Another resolution adopted at the same plenary session echoed the Maoist strategy of revolution in emphasizing that Asia, Latin America, and Africa represent "the countryside of the world" while Europe and North America are "its cities," and that the path to successful completion of the world revolution lies in assigning major importance at present to the revolutions in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, "that is to say, to the revolutions in the countryside of the world." [31]

Still more recent policy pronouncements by the PKI have emulated the Chinese Communist note of militancy and aggressiveness. The PKI National Party Conference in mid-July 1964, for example, noted that the anti-Goulart coup in Brazil showed "how dangerous it is to place one-sided emphasis on the 'peaceful road.'" Lashing out against "modern revisionists," the conference declared that only when the people "do not surrender the weapons in their hands" can the anti-imperialist struggle be victorious and the international Communist movement realize its aims. The consequences of militancy for world peace are apparently of secondary concern, for, as Aidit declared in his address to the Chinese Communist Higher Party School in Peking in September 1963, the PKI adheres

[28] For interpretations of *Dekon*, see Aidit's *Berani, Berani . . ., op. cit.*, p. 12, and *Pemetjahan Masalah Ekonomi dan Ilmu Ekonomi Indonesia Dewasa Ini*, Djakarta, Pembaruan, 1964, pp. 5-6, 19-22, 26-30, 37-42. See also, *e.g.*, Sakirman, *Kembali ke Dekon, Laksanakan Konsekwen Patriotisme Ekonomi*, Djakarta, Jajasan Pembaruan, 1964; Asmu, *Masalah-Masalah Landreform*, Djakarta, same publisher, 1964; Aidit, *Kaum Tani Mengganjang Setan-Setan Desa*, Djakarta, same publisher, 1964; also articles in *Ekonomi dan Masjarakat*, Jan.-Mar. 1964, pp. 5-27, and *PKI dan Perwakilan*, No. 2, 1964, pp. 11-15.

[29] On the contrasting Chinese and Soviet positions, see *A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement* (Letter of the CCP Central Committee in reply to Letter of the CPSU Central Committee of March 30, 1963), Peking, Foreign Languages Press, 1963, pp. 12-13; and M. A. Suslov, "Struggle of the CPSU for the Unity of the World Communist Movement," *Soviet Documents*, Vol. II, No. 16 (Apr. 20, 1964), p. 9.

[30] Aidit, *Langit Takkan Runtuh*, Djakarta, Jajasan Pembaruan, 1963, pp. 24-40; *Peking Review*, Oct. 11, 1963, pp. 17-18.

[31] *Harian Rakjat*, Jan. 15 and 17, 1964; Aidit, *Kobarkan Semangat Banteng!, op. cit.*, p. 59.

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to a policy "of resolutely combating imperialism under the slogan 'We love peace, but we love independence more.' " Again, speaking at Surabaja on May 23, 1964, in commemoration of the PKI's 44th anniversary, Aidit asserted that Indonesian Communists and the people and Communist parties of Southeast Asia must combat the "four devils" of "imperialism, feudalism, comprador capitalism and bureaucratic capitalism" by strengthening mutual cooperation, organizing broad national fronts, entering the villages to consolidate worker-peasant alliances, strengthening party leadership and being skillful in *"all forms of struggle"* (emphasis added).[32]

Today, the notion of "the revolution of Southeast Asia" has also been integrated with the standard Communist concept of "proletarian internationalism." For the PKI, this apparently means, in particular, close solidarity with revolutionary movements in what the party now calls the *"Negara A-A-A"* (*i.e.*, the countries of *"Asia, Afrika, Amerika Latin"*) in the fight against "imperialism" and "neo-colonialism." Meanwhile, the first major Communist uprising in Indonesian history, *i.e.*, the revolt of November 12, 1926, is commemorated by PKI spokesmen in terms of its significance for the *"revolusi Asia Tenggara."*[33] This whole pattern of PKI militancy in projecting its revolutionary role beyond the confines of Indonesia dovetails nicely with pronouncements by leading Indonesian officials, from President Sukarno and Foreign Minister Subandrio on down, to the effect that Indonesia's revolutionary mission is not finished and now extends to the elimination of the last vestiges of "imperialism" and "neo-colonialism" from Southeast Asia as a whole. It has also manifested itself in covert Indonesian Communist assistance to Communist insurgents in Malaysia, the Philippines, and even India.[34] Thus, like other nationalist-flavored terms in the party's vocabulary, the "revolution of Southeast Asia" affords the PKI tactical advantages which appear likely to ensure the party an increasingly influential role in Indonesian political life.

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[32] *Harian Rakjat*, July 15, 1964. See also Aidit, *Kibarkan Tinggi Pandji Revolusi*, *op. cit.*, p. 40, and *Djadilah Komunis jang Baik dan Lebih Baik Lagi*, Djakarta, Jajasan Pembaruan, 1964, pp. 60-61.

[33] *E.g.*, Aidit, "12 November & revolusi Asia Tenggara," *Bintang Merah*, Nov. 1963, pp. 8-9; Sudisman (PKI Politburo member), *43 Tahun Menempa Kesabaran, Ketjintaan dan Kegemasan Revolusioner*, Djakarta, Jajasan Pembaruan, 1964, esp. p. 11.

[34] See the author's forthcoming article, "Indonesian Communism's Expansionist Role in Southeast Asia," in *International Journal*, Spring 1965.

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The Agricultural Scene

EDITORS' NOTE: This issue carries a number of articles which should help to explain why nearly half a century after the Communist Party came to power in Russia, its First Secretary still finds it necessary to declare that "an upsurge in agriculture is something . . . vitally necessary . . . for the successful construction of communism," and that agriculture must finally be provided with "a firm economic foundation" (L. I. Brezhnev, Pravda, *March 27, 1965). The "mistakes" which Brezhnev complained about in his speech—and which, in traditional Soviet style, he laid at the feet of his predecessor rather than viewing them as outgrowths of the system at large—are first analyzed in detail by Miss Nimitz, and then illustrated with examples from recent Soviet fiction by Mr. Hingley. Another look at the agricultural problem is provided by Mr. Horvath (p. 50), who compares the successes of countries such as Japan and Denmark with the Communist failures in Russia and Eastern Europe. The reader is also referred to Mr. Karcz's review (p. 34), which deals with other aspects of Khrushchev's agricultural policies.*

The Lean Years

By Nancy Nimitz

Last March, five months after Khrushchev's retirement, the party Central Committee got around to his favorite subject. In a terse speech devoid of proverbs and "sounds of amusement in the hall," Brezhnev criticized recent agricultural policy and outlined plans for the future.[1] The present essay offers a critique which in some ways parallels Brezhnev's, while attempting also to assess Khrushchev's personal responsibility for the poor record in agriculture under the Seven-Year Plan.

In no other area, it can be argued, did Khrushchev reveal himself so clearly as a transitional

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[1] L. I. Brezhnev, Report to the March 1965 plenum, *Pravda*, March 27, 1965.

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leader, initially progressive in dealing with the problems accumulated in the countryside during years of neglect, ultimately unwilling to acknowledge the new problems generated by his own reforms. The culmination of these reforms was the abolition of machine tractor stations (MTS) in 1958. Thereafter collective farms were to operate their own machinery; the controls previously exercised through MTS were to be superseded by economic levers; costs would fall while output soared. Output in 1958, a year of unusually favorable weather, was indeed high. But increase over the next five years was negligible.

Why was the second half of the decade since 1953 so much less successful than the first? The evidence assembled here deals with trends in inputs and incentives, the financial problems faced by farms as a result of MTS reorganization, and the central policy issue which emerged after 1958—whether differences in farm efficiency reflect differences in leadership (as Khrushchev stoutly maintained), or originate in natural conditions which demand economic rather than administrative remedies (as was argued by an increasing body of economists, farm managers, and local officials). As we shall see. Khrushchev's voluntaristic approach was inspired by his determination to expand agricultural output at a faster rate than resources would allow. This was, perhaps, his fundamental error. The point is not that ambitious plans were not met, though this tarnished Soviet prestige. The real rub was that efforts to achieve impossible goals by compulsion resulted in a serious waste of resources, and thus depressed output below feasible levels.

The Fat Years

To gain perspective, it helps to recall the main features of the 1953-58 period. If it was a more successful period, success was also easier to attain in the sense that difficulties were more obvious and opportunities to solve or bypass them less limited.

One urgent problem was low farm income: peasant incentives were poor and investment inadequate on almost all farms. Given the universality of these conditions, no great discrimination was needed to do good. For example, when the procurement prices paid by the government were far below costs, any price increase which swelled the income of the average farm was an improvement; the structure of relative prices was not crucial. (After 1958, when prices were much closer to costs and therefore more of an incentive to produce a particular product, their interrelationship become a more delicate matter.) Similarly, the wage question was posed in its most primitive form. The problem was not how to structure wages on collective farms so as to encourage concern for improving qualifications or reducing farm costs, but simply to pay farmers enough so they would work at all.

The other big problem was low yields, especially of grain. To raise yields substantially on old land would have required an enormous increase in fertilizer capacity and output; "all that takes time, and we cannot wait," as Khrushchev said with characteristic impatience.[2] So this problem was simply postponed. The resources of manpower and machinery capacity which *were* at hand were used to bring new lands under cultivation, thus providing a quick increase in food grain output and releasing land in old regions for other uses. Corn was also advocated as a substitute for fertilizer, Khrushchev's claim being that it normally gave a higher yield of feed than other crops under equal conditions.

As a stopgap measure to promote marketing of livestock products and to improve peasant income, restrictions on the private household plot were relaxed. The money tax on plots was halved, and compulsory deliveries of plot output to the government were reduced and ultimately abolished.

The impact of some of the major measures can be seen in the first column of Table 1. Between 1953 and 1958 procurement prices almost doubled. Average earnings per man-day on collective farms almost doubled; since this exceeded growth in income from private plots, the importance to the peasant of earnings from the collective increased. The surge in investment resulted in an almost two-fold increase in capital stock (excluding livestock). Sown area increased by one-quarter, employment in man-days by a tenth. And output increased by one-half—a feat which might have emboldened even a leader less impatient than Khrushchev.

The Seven-Year Plan

The plan for 1959-1965 was drawn up in an atmosphere of optimism, with expectation of rapid increases in efficiency as gains from

[2] Conversation with John Bernal, Sept. 25, 1954, in *Stroitelstvo kommunizma v SSSR i razvitie selskovo khoziaistva*, Moscow, Gospolitizdat, 1962-64, Vol. 1, p. 365. This source is cited hereafter as *Stroitelstvo*.

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the abolition of the MTS were consolidated. Output was to increase at a rate of about 8 percent, as in the preceding five years. Meat output was to grow particularly rapidly, by 11 percent a year. Some increase in sown area was probably anticipated, but as Khrushchev acknowledged, remaining reserves of new land which could be brought under cultivation cheaply were small, and "the main thing now is to raise yield."[3] Chemical fertilizer deliveries were to rise from 10 to 31 million tons; however, little of the increment was intended for feed crops and grain. The main increase in grain yield, according to Khrushchev, was to come from expansion of corn sowings in all areas, including those most favorable to winter wheat (the Ukraine and North Caucasus); reduction of wheat output in these regions would be made up by increased procurements of spring wheat from the new lands.[4]

State investment was to decline slightly from the annual average over the preceding five years, while collective farm investment was to double; overall, average annual investment was to increase by about one-half. At the same time, one of the more potent forms of investment—farm machinery—was evidently to increase little if at all.[5]

[3] Report to the December 1958 plenum, *Stroitelstvo*, Vol. 3, p. 355.

[4] Concluding remarks to the December 1958 plenum, *ibid.*, pp. 437-40.

[5] Khrushchev in his report to the December 1958 plenum was clearly more concerned with improving the quality and assortment of machinery than in enlarging total volume: "Up to now our industry has concentrated on delivering as many tractors and combines to agriculture as possible. We shall continue to supply collective and state farms with new and improved tractors and combines. But from now on the emphasis will be on organizing production of other machines vitally necessary to agriculture. . . ." (*Pravda*, Dec. 16, 1958, p. 5). The paragraph containing this statement was omitted from the *Stroitelstvo* text of the report published four years later.

Some Agricultural Indicators, 1953-58 and 1958-63[a]

		1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963
		(1953=100)	(1958=100)				
1.	Gross output	151	101	103	106	107	99
2.	Sown area	124	100	104	105	110	112
3.	Chemical fertilizer deliveries[b]	159	105	107	110	126	146
4.	Capital stock[c]	190	113	124	134	152	171
5.	Productive investment By socialized sector, total[c]	248	108	110	121	134	153
6.	By the state	266	89	108	131	148	184
7.	By collective farms	239	126	111	112	121	125
8.	Employment in man-days	110	95	92	90	90	88
9.	Output per man-day	137	106	112	118	119	112
10.	Procurement prices[d]	192	101	101	103	112	x
11.	Collective farmer earnings per man-day[e]	188	(91)	(99)	115	117	x

NOTES: [a] All agriculture, except where otherwise specified. ()= provisional estimate. x = not available. [b] Converted to active ingredients. [c] Excluding livestock. [d] Paid to collective farms and the private sector. [e] Including payments in kind probably valued at retail prices.

SOURCES: Row 1: TsSU, *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1962 godu*, Moscow, Gosstatizdat, 1963, pp. 226-27; *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1963 godu*, Moscow, "Statistika," 1965, p. 225. Row 2: *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1962 godu*, p. 247; *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1963 godu*, p. 242. Row 3: *Vestnik statistiki*, No. 5, 1964, p. 83. Row 4: TsSU, *SSSR v tsifrakh v 1963 godu*, Moscow, "Statistika," 1964, p. 31; *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1962 godu*, p. 53; *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1963 godu*, p. 55. Rows 5-7: *Vestnik statistiki*, No. 5, 1964, pp. 91-92. Row 8: Author's estimates, from a forthcoming study of farm employment in the USSR. Row 9: Row 1 divided by Row 8. Row 10: S. G. Stoliarov, *O tsenakh i tsenoobrazovanii v SSSR*, Moscow, Gosstatizdat, 1963, p. 106. Row 11: Index for years other than 1959-60 derived by linking index numbers in *Voprosy ekonomiki*, No. 11, 1959, p. 60; *ibid.*, No. 7, 1962, p. 51; *ibid.*, No. 9, 1963, p. 7; Akademiia nauk, Institut ekonomiki, *Materialnoe stimulirovanie razvitiia kolkhoznovo proizvodstva*, Moscow, 1963, p. 106. The trend between 1958 and 1960 is assumed identical with the trend in the RSFSR (*Voprosy ekonomiki*, No. 6, 1964, p. 54).

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As Khrushchev made crystal clear, no further increases in procurement prices were contemplated: growth in collective farm income was to come from higher productivity.[6] And as he indicated more obliquely, the private sector had grown enough. He praised the example of farmers in his native village of Kalinovka, who had voluntarily sold their cows to the collective, and predicted that this would gradually happen everywhere to the mutual profit of farms and farmers.[7] He also warned local officials that the decisive criterion in judging progress in meat production would be the growth of socialized sector output (rather than total output including the private sector),[8] and argued that fields left fallow to provide summer pasture for private stock should be put to more intensive use.[9]

From this summary, it will be apparent that the Seven-Year Plan relied heavily on sheer momentum to sustain the rate of growth of the preceding five years. Nevertheless, Khrushchev expressed confidence that the 1965 meat target of 16 million tons could be exceeded—that the level of output needed to catch up with the United States (20-21 million tons) was not unattainable.[10] He could hardly have forgotten (since the incident outraged him) that Soviet economists the year before had told him the USSR would not equal US per capita meat production before 1975.[11] He was also aware that the crop to which livestock goals were so closely tied—corn—did only moderately well in its fourth year of mass trial: of total sowings in 1958, 22 percent produced dry grain and 19 percent immature ears; 30 percent was harvested for silage before any ears developed ("essentially, for no more than hay"), while 29 percent was never harvested at all, but consumed on the root as green feed ("in actuality, this was corn killed by weeds").[12] In short, he must have known the plan was taut. But he clearly regarded some strain as a virture,[13] and if he privately recognized the risk of overstrain, he was impelled to accept it by the political importance he attached to abundance.

The Need for Speed

The significance of agricultural growth, Khrushchev once observed, is understood not only by the educated Marxist, or the educated man in general, but by everyone who has learned how to eat.[14] In other words, abundance is persuasive, and no country seeking to demonstrate the superiority of its economic system can win without it. Abundance is also relative, however, and the necessary rate of growth (for a country already well above the subsistence level) is debatable. Certainly per capita consumption should be maintained, which implies for the USSR an annual growth rate of 1.5 percent. Probably most of Khrushchev's colleagues in the Presidium agreed that output should rise somewhat faster than this, to permit improvement in the quality of the average diet and give substance to rising money wage incentives. It is doubtful that many shared his faith that the USSR could quickly catch up with US per capita meat and milk output, causing collapse in the capitalist world.

He himself did not express so extreme a view until May 1957, when he announced the catch-up campaign.[15] One factor in his decision may have been the stunning success of the grain harvest in the new lands in 1956: regions where new sowings were concentrated accounted for over half of total output and two-thirds of government procurements. Probably another was his growing awareness that the MTS were incurably inefficient, and that their removal would, so to speak, unleash collective farms; the evidence suggests that he reached this conclusion early in 1957.[16] But perhaps

[6] Report to the December 1958 plenum, *Stroitelstvo*, Vol. 3, p. 402.
[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 391-92, 404-06.
[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 376-77.
[9] Concluding remarks to the December 1958 plenum, *ibid.*, pp. 445-46.
[10] Report to the December 1958 plenum, *ibid.*, pp. 412-13.
[11] Speech to a conference of agricultural workers in Leningrad, May 22, 1957, *ibid.*, Vol. 2, pp. 449-50.
[12] Concluding remarks to the December 1956 plenum, *ibid.*, Vol. 3, p. 441.
[13] *E.g.*, in urging Krasnodar to aim at an average corn silage yield of 500 centners per hectare rather than the 300 proposed by the party secretary, he said: "Obviously you have underestimated your possibilities. Such an approach will not create the necessary tension in work" (*ibid.*, p. 438).
[14] Speech to a conference of RSFSR agricultural workers, March 12, 1963, *ibid.*, Vol. 7, p. 435.
[15] Speech to a conference of agricultural workers in Leningrad, May 22, 1957, *Pravda*, May 24, 1957. The text as published in 1962 in *Stroitelstvo*, Vol. 2, pp. 441-61, omits or alters sections predicting victory in the campaign by 1961.
[16] Apparently a concrete proposal to abolish MTS was discussed in the party Presidium in the spring of 1957. This is implied by Matskevich, one time Minister of Agriculture, who claimed that Molotov and Kaganovich tried to "terrorize" the ministry in order to dredge up materials opposing the measure (*Plenum Tsentralnovo komiteka Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskovo Soiuza, 15-19 dekabria 1958 goda*, Moscow, Gospolitizdat, 1958, p. 422). It is unlikely that they were in a position to terrorize anybody after June, when they were denounced and expelled from both the Presidium and the CC.

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the crucial consideration was that catching up must be possible *because* it was politically important, and was therefore a goal to which the nation would rally.

How had the economists arrived at their ridiculous estimate of 1975 for the catch-up date? According to Khrushchev's description, "they took their little pencils" and calculated what the growth rate had been for many years, and then projected this rate into the future. Their arithmetic was correct, but they failed to appreciate the profound changes which had taken place in agriculture since 1953. Many farms, literally within two or three years, were increasing output 10, 15, 20, times. "What kind of arithmetic can encompass all this? This is politics, this is a political phenomenon. . . ." If economists relied less on their pencils and more on the patriotism of the people, they would see that the task could be solved by 1960, or at least by 1961. The reason it had to be solved was that the US "by its volume of production acts on the psychology of literally the entire Western world." The longer Soviet agricultural abundance was delayed, the longer capitalist critics could slander socialism and collectivization, admitting Russia's heavy industrial might but jeering that her cities were fed by marketings from private plots. By proving the viability of collective agriculture, the USSR would advance the revolutionary movement everywhere: "Our actions to raise the economy and improve the people's welfare will influence the minds of undecided people more strongly than any other means." [17]

The Impact of MTS Reorganization

Though the idea of abandoning MTS was considered in the Presidium from early 1957 on, there seems to have been little advance planning for the change. In fact, the piecemeal enactment of the new policy suggests that Khrushchev proposed reorganization to the public in January 1958 before his colleagues had reached agreement on even the broad outlines of the measures involved.[18] Lack of preparation would by itself explain some of the defects in the plans finally enacted. In addition, opponents of reorganization may have blocked measures to handle needs which were foreseen.[19] In any case, difficulties were compounded by the speed with which reorganization was carried out. In the early stages Khrushchev admitted that the poorer farms concentrated in nonblack soil regions might not be able to acquire machinery for several years; by August he had decided that maintaining MTS to serve them was not expedient, and reorganization was essentially completed in a single year.[20] Even weak farms were expected to pay for MTS equipment within five years, while simultaneously buying replacements and new types of machinery and expanding construction.

Procurement prices did rise when these obligations were assumed, and some efficient farms were able to pay off their debts within one or two years. However, the new price level (11 percent above 1957 [21]) was simply not high enough to offset new investment burdens and machinery operating expenses on less productive farms.

The procurement prices established in 1958 remained virtually unchanged through May 1962. Whether they were originally intended to cover additional investment and operating costs is not clear; what is certain is that costs were higher than expected, since prices of new machinery, spare parts, and petroleum products were quietly, substantially, and inexplicably raised in 1959.[22] Rising costs in industry were not the reason for the increases, since industry

[17] Speech to a conference of agricultural workers in Leningrad, May 22, 1957, *loc. cit.*

[18] Speech to a conference of Belorussian agricultural workers, Jan. 22, 1958, *Stroitelstvo*, Vol. 2, pp. 520-25. The party decree belatedly approving reorganization and calling for a nation-wide discussion of the details was not published until late February. The law formally authorizing sale of machinery to collectives and the reorganization of MTS into repair and supply depots (RTS) came at the end of March. Instructions for determining the price of used machinery were published in late April. Other relevant issues were not settled until mid-June.

[19] Khrushchev and others have alluded to opposition from theorists who regarded sale of state property to collectives as a dangerous and backward step (*Stroitelstvo*, Vol. 3, pp. 67-68), and who advocated instead the gradual conversion of collectives to state farms. An experiment in this direction in fact occurred in 1957, when large numbers of grain farms in the new lands and North Caucasus and cotton farms in the Uzbek SSR were converted. The results were not encouraging: conversion proved to be most acceptable to collective farmers on those farms where it was least advantageous to the state—that is, where earnings were low because costs in real terms were high (see Vinnichenko's article in *Oktiabr*, No. 11, 1957, pp. 205-23; Orlovskii in *ibid.*, No. 12, 1957, pp. 176-78).

[20] See his report to the Supreme Soviet, March 27, 1958, and his speech in Smolensk, Aug. 13, 1958, in *Stroitelstvo*, Vol. 3, respectively pp. 131-32 and p. 274.

[21] Stoliarov, *loc. cit.*, in sources to Table 1.

[22] *Spravochnik partiinovo rabotnika, vypusk vtoroi*, Moscow, Gospolitizdat, 1959, pp. 365-69; R. V. Alekseeva and A. P. Voronin, *Nakoplenie i razvitie kolkhoznoi sobstvennosti*, Moscow, Ekonomizdat, 1963, p. 42; Panin in *Planovoe khoziaistvo*, No. 9, 1964, p. 76.

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did not benefit by them (at least, not directly); the difference between the old and new price levels was deducted to the budget. Whatever the aim may have been, the effect was to place extra pressure on farm financial resources.

Another source of pressure was shortage of credit. MTS had provided a form of both short and long term credit, since payment for their operations was not made until the harvest, and the cost of replacing MTS machinery (a concealed ingredient of the payment) was spread out over several years. After reorganization, bank credits and procurement advances did not expand to fill the gap.[23] Most farms were bothered with shortages of working capital, and the more backward had the hard choice of reducing investment, or reducing earnings of members in order to pay for investment out of current income.

As we have seen, the procurement prices prevailing from 1958 to mid-1962 were too low; in addition, they suffered from grave structural defects. For the USSR as a whole, crop prices exceeded collective farm costs of production by more or less generous margins, but all livestock products except wool and sheep were quite unprofitable, thus discouraging output of the very products stressed in the Seven-Year Plan. The ratio of prices to costs in 1958 and 1960 was roughly 60 to 65 percent for cattle, pigs, poultry, and eggs, and 85 to 90 percent for milk.[24] In 1961, according to one Soviet source, the total cost of livestock output delivered to the state by collective farms exceeded receipts by 1.2 billion rubles.[25] The reason for this anomalous distribution of price incentives was that further increase in livestock prices would have required raising retail prices, politically a repugnant step. The hope was that livestock costs would fall (they did not), and that in the meantime crop profits on each farm would offset livestock losses (this did not happen in regions comparatively weak in crop marketings).

The structure of zonal prices was also defective, as it tended to penalize high-cost zones. That is to say: the spread in prices was much smaller than the spread in average costs, so that profit margins were high in favorable regions and low in unfavorable ones. This would have been reasonable if deliveries from less favorable regions had been voluntary, but they were neither voluntary nor negligible. Because of this price pattern, net farm income varied greatly between regions: the rich tended to get richer and the poor poorer. (Variations were smaller before MTS reorganization, when farms in less favorable regions received a subsidy in the form of lower rates for MTS services.)[26]

Even the best system of regional prices could not have coped with cost variations arising from differences in quality of land within regions. These required remedies differentiated by individual farm, such as taxes based on net rather than gross income, or direct money rent payments varying with quality of land, or furtive sudsidies in the form of non-repaid loans or state supported land improvement programs. There were practical obstacles to such measures—an inadequate accounting system on collective farms, lack of a detailed land survey, and so on—but the main reason for postponing them was the prevailing official position that backwardness was due to "subjective" factors such as poor management, rather than to poor land.

Since poor farms were numerous, rapid growth in output could not be achieved without them. In the absence of better remedies, local officials could only try to solve their poverty by amalgamating them with more prosperous neighbors, or by urging their conversion to state farms. Evidence suggests that both amalgamations and conversions were widespread in the years 1959-61. But neither solution was satisfactory. Amalgamation led to farms of unmanageable size or shape, and sometimes the lean kine ate up the fat. Conversions placed unanticipated demands on the budget not only for working capital (1.4 billion rubles in 1961-62) and investment funds, but also to cover operating losses (0.6 billion rubles in 1961-62).[27]

Concern over the structure of procurement prices and inequalities in collective farm income was expressed in economic journals as early as 1959.[28] Grudging official recognition of these problems did not begin until 1961.

[23] See Karpov in *Voprosy ekonomiki*, No. 9, 1964, pp. 50-62.

[24] A. G. Zverev, *Natsionalnyi dokhod i finansy SSSR*. Moscow, Gosfinizdat, 1961, p. 306; Alekseeva, *op. cit.*, p. 45. In these sources the labor component of cost is valued not at rates actually paid on collective farms but at state farm wage rates.

[25] Gumerov in *Finansy SSSR*, No. 4, 1964, p. 10. Labor is valued at state farm wage rates.

[26] Nauchno-issledovatelskii finansovyi institut, *Denezhnye dokhody kolkhozov i differentsialnaia renta*, Moscow, Gosfinizdat, 1963, pp. 28-29, 36-37, 142-43.

[27] *Finansy SSSR*, No. 7, 1963, p. 16; *Stroitelstvo*, Vol. 7, p. 299; *ibid.*, Vol. 8, p. 66.

[28] See, *e.g.*, T. Zaslavskaia's article in *Voprosy ekonomiki*, No. 11, 1959, especially pp. 62-64.

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Policy Trends after Reorganization

In the first two years of the Seven-Year Plan, Khrushchev's main economic concern was technological advance in industry; agriculture receded into the background. Nevertheless, significant developments occurred. At the patriotic level there was the campaign to exceed planned goals. Riazan Oblast set the example in January 1959 by pledging to increase meat deliveries threefold in a single year, and other regions followed suit. Less publicized but no less compelling were the pressures to sow more corn: also in January 1959 an RSFSR decree stated categorically that no farm could solve the feed problem without it, and directed local officials to see that the best land and adequate amounts of organic fertilizer were allocated to it.[29] At the December 1959 plenum Khrushchev expressed satisfaction with the increase in socialized sector meat output (32 percent), praised Riazan for meeting its pledge, and hinted at further expansion of corn through reduction of clean fallow and displacement of lower yielding feed crops. "Let me make a qualification, comrades: I am not proposing right now that everyone substitute corn for oats . . . but I am convinced that this is correct." [30]

In 1960 meat deliveries lagged, and scandalous stories of forced pledges and faked plan fulfillment began to emerge. It turned out that Riazan farms had originally volunteered to increase meat deliveries in 1959 by a mere 60 percent; the threefold increase was mysteriously imposed from above, and actual deliveries were not triple but only double 1958.[31]

In 1961 agriculture—particularly the grain problem—returned to the fore. At the January plenum Khrushchev lashed out in all directions, savagely heckling republican and local leaders as they spoke, denouncing fraudulent statistics, criticizing planned neglect of agricultural investment, and calling (without apparent results) for a massive irrigation program approaching the scale and urgency of the new lands effort. But his faith in rapid progress was unimpaired: "Comrades, you know I am an optimist and believe we can catch up with the United States in per capita agricultural output in a few years. . . . Organization, leadership—that's all we need." [32]

Many of the 1961 measures were organizational. The Ministry of Agriculture lost all control functions and became a purely technical body. Procurement agencies assumed the main responsibility for planning farm output at the local level. A new agency (Soiuzselkhoztekhnika) was formed to handle supply of industrial inputs to farms. At the same time, farm financial difficulties were not wholly ignored. A little-publicized decree lowered machinery prices again (though not to the 1958 level), exempted most livestock income from tax, reduced interest rates, and postponed repayment of long-term debt by poor farms.[33]

Though grain procurements increased in 1961, they still failed to cover growing government requirements, and increase in grain output was negligible. Rather than scale down the livestock program, Khrushchev elected to gamble on a radical change in cropping patterns to increase grain and feed output. In his report to the 22nd Party Congress in October 1961 he reaffirmed his conviction that catching up with the US was feasible, and indicated that the time for everyone to substitute corn and pulses for oats, grasses and clean fallow had arrived.[34]

As Khrushchev himself acknowledged in his report to the March 1962 plenum, existing stocks of farm machinery amounted to about half the number needed to perform agricultural operations punctually under a more intensive system of cropping.[35] The chemical fertilizers required for a shift to higher-yielding crops were in short supply. Hence it was unlikely that farms would willingly embrace the new program, and a new administrative organ—the territorial production administration—was established to force compliance. Khrushchev made its coercive role quite clear:

All our plans and calculations may hang in mid-air if . . . we do not exert the necessary influence on every farm to exploit its possibilities more fully. . . . [At present] collective and state farms have a certain autonomy; active intervention and daily influence upon production by government organs is lacking.

Formally the collective farm is a self-governing organization whose production plans are determined by its members. But:

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[29] *Spravochnik partiinovo rabotnika, vypusk vtoroi*, pp. 371-74.
[30] *Stroitelstvo*, Vol. 4, p. 77.
[31] Theses for Khrushchev's speech to the January 1961 plenum, Jan. 5, 1961, *ibid.*, pp. 265-66.
[32] *Stroitelstvo*, Vol. 4, p. 377.
[33] Party/government decree of Jan. 10, 1961, *Sbornik reshenii po selskomu khoziaistvu*, Moscow, Selkhozizdat, 1963, pp. 424-30.
[34] *Stroitelstvo*, Vol. 6, pp. 24-26.
[35] *Ibid.*, pp. 426-27.

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The party does not stand on formalities. . . . Relations between cooperatives and the government cannot be based on the principle of non-intervention.

If collectives have the right to expect financial help from the government, extending even to cancellation of their debts, then the government has the right to make them use their land more intensively. [36]

Judged only by their effectiveness in changing crop structure, production administrations were a success. The area devoted to clean fallow, grasses, and oats declined in 1962 by 22 million hectares, while the area under corn, pulses, and suger beet for feed increased by 15 million hectares. Summarizing the year's results, Khrushchev claimed that the shift was largely responsible for modest gains in grain output and procurement, but he implicitly admitted some waste:

If a farm lacks the machinery and people needed to cultivate land released from grass, it is better to let the grass grow than to plow up the field, sow sugar beet, not cultivate it, and get neither hay nor beets.

He mentioned substitution of grain for 20 more million hectares of grass and clean fallow as the obvious source of further increase in grain output. [37] However, in contrast to his usual practice, he expressly refused to say how much each republic should accomplish in this direction (leaving it to republican administrators to decide), and he criticized unqualified local officials who disregarded the practical experience and specialized knowledge of farm management. [38] Apparently some republics felt the shift in cropping patterns had gone too far already; grass sowings increased again in 1963, while corn and sugar beet declined.

From these signs of extreme administrative pressure on farms in 1962, one may hazard the guess that it was a demoralizing year for agriculture. It is true that there were some positive price developments. From March on, building materials and metal were sold to collective farms at wholesale rather than retail prices. [39] And in June procurement prices of meat, milk, and eggs were finally raised by about one-third, bringing them much closer to average costs. [40] But though these price changes significantly improved the terms of trade for collective farms as a whole, they did not correct defects in regional price structure, and they most benefited farms with large marketings—in other words, the more productive. At least in relative terms, the poor continued to get poorer, and there was no place for them to go but down (since few collectives were amalgamated or converted to state farms after 1961).

If 1962 was demoralizing, the crop failure in 1963 was traumatic. Grain output fell by one-quarter, and procurements were roughly 15 million tons below government needs. After

[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 402-04.

— Есть предложение выбрать председателями колхоза близнецов Сидоровых: один будет ездить по совещаниям, другой — работать.

Рисунок Е. ВЕДЕРНИКОВА по теме В. Тильмана, присланной на конкурс.

A PERFECT SOLUTION

Caption: "A proposal has been made to elect the Sidorov twins chairmen of the kolkhoz: one will attend the conferences while the other works."

—From Krokodil (Moscow), March 10, 1965.

[37] Memorandum to the party Presidium, Nov. 10, 1962, *ibid.*, Vol. 7, pp. 300-01, 304-05.

[38] Report to the November 1962 plenum, *ibid.*, pp. 389-90.

[39] Council of Ministers decree of Feb. 14, 1962, *Sbornik reshenii . . .*, pp. 554-55.

[40] Council of Ministers decree of May 17, 1962. Retail prices were raised correspondingly, not so much to sop up excess purchasing power (though Khrushchev admitted inflationary pressures) as to prevent the fraud and speculation which would have flourished if retail prices had remained below or near procurement prices. See Khrushchev's speeches of June 2 and 27, *Stroitelstvo*, Vol. 7, pp. 35-36, 50.

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several lean years, reserves were low, and over 10 million tons of grain were imported to help cover the shortfall. Bread supply was close to normal, but the acute feed shortage resulted in a 42 percent decline in pig herds.

Without trying to sort out the causes, we may conclude that unusually bad weather hit Soviet agriculture when it was unusually vulnerable. Khrushchev's response shows that he also recognized some human errors in the disaster. He became less dogmatic about corn, expressed doubts about the quality of production administration leadership, and acknowledged that intensification with fertilizer was impossible. However, he approached a new course with his old abandon, calling in September for an increase in fertilizer output to a staggering 100 million tons (more than five-fold) by 1970. The account of how this figure was reached is instructive:

A few months ago I asked comrades in Gosplan and the Ministry of Agriculture to give me their thoughts on increasing fertilizer production. . . . They produced a report saying that something like 40 million tons of fertilizers were needed for grain, but warned that this would take enormous capital outlays—1.7 billion rubles. Here they were considering the needs of the branch (of agriculture) which supplies the nation's food, and planners' hands shook at the idea of allocating 1.7 billion rubles to agricultural chemistry. I had to explain . . . that it wasn't so huge a sum for our country . . ., that we shouldn't skimp on resources for this purpose. Then I named a figure of 3 to 4 billion rubles for capital investment in the fertilizer industry. After this, Gosplan workers demonstrated more daring, you might say, and fertilizer production plans began to look different.[41]

By the December plenum the goal had been reduced to 70 to 80 million tons. Perhaps comrades in the Presidium felt that daring was not the first desideratum in investment planning.

At the December 1963 plenum Khrushchev reaffirmed his conviction that there were "no objective reasons" why backward farms should persist side by side with efficient ones. "As a rule, backwardness is caused by the level of leadership." But he conceded that it was hard for poor farms to pay qualified leaders, and proposed that loans should be extended to them for this purpose. Apparently somewhat chastened by the fate of the fertilizer goal, he assured his audience that "we have already talked over this question, and I am stating not only my own ideas but the opinion of other members of the Presidium."[42]

At the February 1964 plenum Volovchenko, Minister of Agriculture, gave the main report and condemned the excesses of the campaign against grass.

From entirely correct criticism of the grassland system, some workers drew erroneous conclusions. . . . In some places people are even a little afraid to sow clover and alfalfa: you may be taken for a grasslander.[43]

In his speech to the plenum Khrushchev allowed that poor farms needed "substantial material support" not only to pay management and machine operators but also to raise the incentives of ordinary collective farmers. The means he personally espoused was the establishment of a pension system financed partly by deductions from collective farm income and partly by the state: if the size of individual pensions was influenced by each farm's income and each farmer's participation in collective production, there would be an incentive to work harder (even if earnings were low) in order to get a larger pension later.[44]

A March decree formally condemned excessive interference by local organs in farm planning.[45] In July the Supreme Soviet approved a pension law for rank and file collective farmers; a few days later a decree extended full state pension rights to collective farm management and machine operators.[46] In addition to these steps forecast by the February plenum, an unpublished decree or decrees in the first half of the year finally introduced a number of measures specifically to help backward farms. Besides granting them long-term loans to pay farm administration and machine operators at state farm wage rates, the government can-

[41] Speech to a conference of agricultural workers in Krasnodar, Sept. 26, 1963, *Stroitelstvo*, Vol. 8, pp. 175-76.

[42] Concluding remarks to the December 1963 plenum, *ibid.*, pp. 347-48.

[43] *Plenum Tsentralnovo komiteta Kommunisticheskoi partii Sovetskovo soiuza, 10-15 fevralia 1964 goda*, Moscow, Politizdat, 1964, p. 27.

[44] *Stroitelstvo*, Vol. 8, pp. 435, 438-41.

[45] Party/government decree of March 20, 1964, in *Pravda*, March 24.

[46] *Izvestia*, July 16, 1964; Gosudarstvennyi komitet po voprosam truda i zarabotnoi platy, *Biulleten*, No. 10, 1964, pp. 40-45.

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celled their debts, exempted them from most of their income tax, assumed most of the cost of improving their land, and directed that almost half of their money incomes be earmarked for wages.[47]

It is doubtful that Khrushchev was enthusiastic about most of these concessions. He continued to stress leadership, and grumbled at existing regional price differentials, small though they were. "For the same products we pay one farm more than another; in essence we encourage those who produce at a loss." [48] He implied that many backward farms were parasitical. "There are even collective farms that live off the government: today they ask for bank loans, and tomorrow they try to get their debts written off." [49] What was really needed, to his mind, was an overhaul of agricultural administration to ensure expert guidance in the period of intensification and specialization ahead. Many production administration personnel knew nothing about agriculture, and even those with training could not be expected to be experts in all branches. During his August tour around the countryside he mentioned that a fall plenum would discuss the formation of specialized administrations for each of the major farm products. "Some comrades" had advised him not to reveal the scheme in advance, he confided, but he was certain of its correctness and saw no reason for secrecy.[50]

In October Khrushchev went to his southern vacation home, where he reputedly finished a draft of his new plan for agricultural administration—while arrangements were meanwhile made in Moscow for his retirement.

Input Trends

Some of the results of agricultural policy since 1958 are indicated in the right hand columns of Table 1. They suggest that one reason the second half of the decade was less successful was simply that less was put into agriculture. Employment declined, while capital stock and sown area increased more slowly than in the 1953-58 period. (The comparison is still less favorable if capital stock is defined to include livestock.) Furthermore, there were

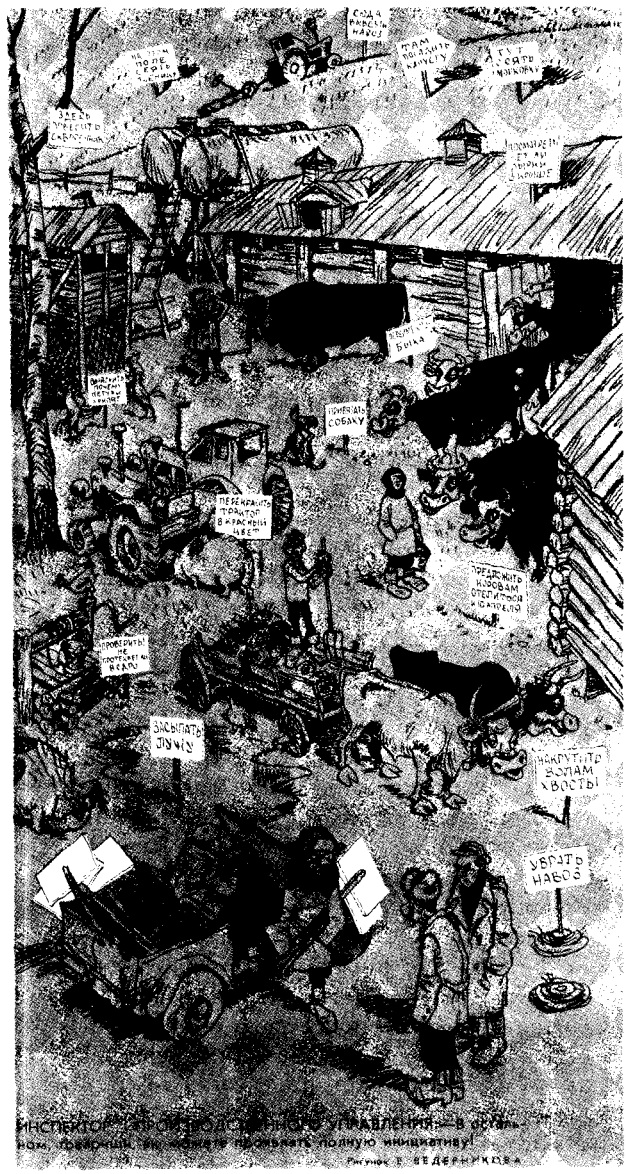
[47] *Ekonomicheskaia gazeta*, June 20, 1964, p. 33; *ibid.*, Aug. 8, 1964, p. 33; *Finansy SSSR*, No. 4, 1964, p. 19; *Zakupki selskokhoziaistvennykh produktov*, No. 7, 1964, p. 13.

[48] Memorandum to the party Presidium, April 13, 1964, in *Izvestia*, April 24.

[49] Report to the Supreme Soviet, *Pravda*, July 14, 1964.

[50] *Pravda*, Aug. 10 and 14, 1964.

RUNNING THE FARM



Signs, left by inspector from the production administration, read: "Fill in the puddle. Collect manure. Curl the tails on the oxen. Tell the cows to calve by April 10. Tie up the dog. Rename the bull. Repaint the tractor red. Find out why the roosters are hoarse. Check the well bucket for leaks. Sow wheat in this field. Apply manure. Plant cabbages there. Plant carrots here. Examine roof for holes. Hang a box here for the starlings."

Inspector's parting remark: "In other matters, comrades, you are free to display your initiative."

—From Krokodil (Moscow), March 30, 1963.

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On the Agricultural Front: The Tasks of the Party

The task consists in arousing people for the fulfillment of the measures of the CPSU Central Committee and ensuring their firm and consistent implementation. This depends most of all on the efforts, energy and persistence of the party organizations and their leaders, on their ability to organize the masses. . . .

The task consists in orienting our press toward the businesslike and thorough illumination of questions of the development of agriculture. The newspapers must promptly note and propagandize everything new, must raise vital questions of collective farm and state farm production and teach the masses through progressive examples.

A vast army of agitators and propagandists is taking part in the practical implementation of mass-political work in the countryside. At meetings and in personal talks with collective farmers and state farm workers, these toilers on the political front always endeavor to explain the policy of our party and the most important events taking place in the country and abroad, and to mobilize the people for excellent feats of labor. They must do much work explaining the decisions of the present plenary session of the CPSU Central Committee. . . .

In the face of the complex and great tasks in the sphere of agriculture, we must emphasize with renewed force that ideological tempering, inflexible conviction in the correctness of party policy, is the force that helps all of us to overcome any difficulties, to resolve practical tasks skillfully.

The experience of the Communist Party convincingly shows that the higher the ideological level and theoretical training of party, Soviet and economic cadres and the more skillful their guidance of the masses, the more fruitful will be their entire practical activity. Our cadres must continue to master the theory of Marxism-Leninism, profoundly study the laws of socialist economics and improve the forms and methods of political work among the masses. . . .

—L. I. Brezhnev, report to plenary session of the CPSU Central Committee, March 24, 1965; in Pravda, *March 27, pp. 2-4.*

changes in the quality, structure, and use of inputs which reduced their effectiveness.

Intensity of labor must have been adversely affected by trends in incentives. Average cash-plus-kind earnings per man-day on collective farms fell very perceptibly in 1959, and the modest recovery after 1960 was associated with an increase in the share of cash which not all farmers welcomed, since they depended on earnings in kind for much of the bread and feed consumed by their families and livestock.[51] Decline in distributions of grain, hay, and straw, together with administrative pressures to sell stock to the socialized sector, led to reductions in private herds.[52] The sown area of the private sector also declined.[53] As a result of these trends in herds and sowings, plot output decreased, thus cancelling out part of the increase in collective earnings.[54]

Judging by the distribution of investment, the increase in capital stock after 1958 was concentrated in buildings, that is, in forms of capital which contribute least to increasing output. A new barn may keep cattle from freezing to death, but livestock productivity is determined mainly by feed and water supply. Over the years 1959-63 the forms of investment which most directly influence crop and livestock yields—machinery, electrification, and water management—accounted for only 46 percent of total investment, compared with 55 percent over 1954-58.[55]

In particular, machinery investment was low, never regaining the 1958 level. Deliveries of tractors, grain combines, and trucks were barely sufficient to replace retirements at normal depreciation rates; since total stocks nevertheless increased, there was a gradual

[51] The share of cash in total payments for collective labor rose from 58 percent in 1958 to 74 percent in 1962 (Vysshaia partiinaia shkola, *Ekonomika selskokhoziaistvennykh predpriiatii*, 2nd ed., Moscow, Politizdat, 1963, p. 286).

[52] Reductions between end-of-year 1958 and 1963 amounted (in percent) to: cows, 14; other beef animals, 27; sheep and goats, 16; pigs, 16 (*Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1962 godu*, pp. 303-04; *SSSR v tsifrakh v 1963 godu*, p. 101).

[53] The reduction between 1958 and 1963 amounted to about 9 percent. Since 1956, collective farms have been authorized to reduce plot size below the limit set by the model artel charter (0.5 hectares); apparently this authority was widely exercised in recent years (*see Sovetskaiia Rossiia*, Nov. 14, 1964, and Shelest's speech in *Pravda*, Nov. 6, 1964).

[54] It is reported that private sector output declined between 1958 and 1962 by 4.2 percent (*Ekonomika selskovo khoziaistva*, No. 5, 1964, p. 16). Total peasant income from the collective farm and plot together, per working peasant, reportedly increased between 1958 and 1962 by about 10 percent (TsSU, *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1958 godu*, Moscow, Gosstatizdat, 1959, p. 99; *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1962 godu*, p. 486).

[55] *Vestnik statistiki*, No. 5, 1964, p. 91.

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aging of the machinery park.[56] Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that the park included more and more machines which could not move, since they had been stripped of parts. Scarcity of spares prompted farms to cannibalize machinery and retire the skeletons; a 1961 decree which forbade retirements before the end of normal service life may have prevented the formal writing off of machinery but not its dismantling.[57]

Given the discouraging trends in incentives and in deliveries of machinery and fertilizers (Row 3 of Table 1), the pronounced shift toward more intensive use of land was premature. Corn, pulses, and sugar beet are potentially higher yielding, but also more demanding in terms of machine operations, fertilizers, and labor. In short, they cost more per hectare. In many cases the additional costs were not offset by additional yields, and in some cases substitution resulted in a net decline in feed output ("neither hay nor beets"). There were other costs to this policy as well. The campaign against sown grasses led to neglect of natural hay meadows, historically a cheap and important source of feed in the nonblack soil regions.[58] Displacement of marketed food grains from traditional regions increased the pressure on the new lands, where wheat was planted on wheat year after year, yielding more weeds and less wheat.[59]

Another major cause of higher costs (besides intensification of land use) was the forced increase in socialized sector livestock herds despite feed shortages. Between 1958 and 1962 collective farm cow herds increased by 19 percent, but average feed supply and yield declined, so that the increase in total output was only 1.4 percent. Not only did this waste labor (caring for less productive animals) and investment resources (housing them); it wasted feed as well, since feed inputs per unit of output were higher than necessary.[60] Khrushchev was either unable or unwilling to see that the policy was self-defeating.

Milk yields have declined not only because feed is short but because attention to livestock production has slackened. Herds aren't growing fast enough, and this is affecting milk output. Some people may say that herd growth is also depressed by feed shortage. But these are all bureaucratic excuses.[61]

Conclusions

When Khrushchev revealed the iniquities of his predecessors, he acted as both witness and judge, and outsiders could not fully accept either the evidence or the verdict. His own case is easier, since he has testified volubly and fatally in his own behalf. From his speeches and memoranda it is plain that he personally favored the policies which in retrospect seem to have been most harmful since 1958—premature intensification of crop structure, "pursuit of heads and tails" without regard for feed supply, neglect of backward farms where the potential for increasing yields is high, and the squeeze on private plots.

Will the new regime do better? The program Brezhnev announced at the March 1965 plenum is vague on details, but so far as it goes it is admirable. Restrictions upon the private plot have already been revoked. Procurement prices for grain and livestock products will rise substantially this year, and high-cost regions will get a better break. Inequalities will also be reduced by a shift to taxation of net collective farm incomes (after costs including wages have been met). Investment during the forthcoming Five-Year Plan (1966-70) will be about double the total for 1959-63, and the emphasis seems to be on irrigation and machinery. Machinery prices will be reduced next year.

A major reservation remains. Of all the problems which afflict Soviet agriculture, one of the stubbornest—as Khrushchev intermittently recognized but more often demonstrated—is outside meddling in farm production decisions. Though variations in land and weather require even more flexibility and discrimination in agricultural decision-making than in industry, farms regularly have been told what to do and

[56] According to Lemeshev, over the years 1959-62 average delivery rates (deliveries as a percent of park) were 14.4 for tractors, 12.9 for grain combines, and 9.3 for trucks, while the norms for average annual retirement were 12.5 percent for tractors and combines and 10 percent for trucks (*Voprosy ekonomiki*, No. 2, 1964, pp. 17-18).

[57] According to one report on the Altai region, "thousands" of tractors did not work at all for lack of parts. "What can you do? You can't write off some of the tractors which no longer function; they haven't been in service long enough. So they remain on farms like a dead weight. Work is planned for them, depreciation charges go on. This is one of the reasons crop costs have risen." (*Pravda*, Dec. 7, 1964, p. 2.)

[58] *Ekonomika selskovo khoziaistva*, No. 7, 1964, p. 48; *Pravda*, Nov. 23, 1964, Dec. 16, 1964.

[59] *Izvestia*, Sept. 27, 1964, p. 2.

[60] Gumerov in *Finansy SSSR*, No. 4, 1964, pp. 12-13; *Izvestia*, Nov. 19, 1964, p. 3; *Vestnik statistiki*, No. 12, 1964, pp. 15-16.

[61] Memorandum to the party Presidium, Oct. 29, 1960, in *Stroitelstvo*, Vol. 4, p. 164. See also: *ibid.*, Vol. 7, pp. 469, 482; Vol. 8, p. 79.

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when to do it by people who do not directly suffer the consequences of silly orders. On the cardinal issue of farm autonomy, the new leaders have gone no further than Khrushchev (in theory, at least) was prepared to go. This was to allow each farm to plan its own operations within the constraints imposed by state-determined obligations to deliver particular products.

As Brezhnev admits, fixing delivery goals for individual farms is complicated and also crucial, since it determines to a considerable extent what crops and livestock a farm may produce: "There must be no mistakes here, comrades." There *will* be mistakes, until farms themselves initiate offers to deliver. This has been proposed by Soviet economists,[62] and it need not spell anarchy. In principle, there is no reason why plans for agricultural marketings should not begin at the farm level, move upward to central authorities to be aggregated and adjusted for overall fit, and then passed back down.

Reluctance to trust farm initiative survives from the days when the interests of farmers and the government were opposed, and farm prices were a poor indication of government requirements. If times have really changed, as Khrushchev's successors claim, the best proof would be a move in the direction of greater autonomy.

[62] Kassirov in *Pravda*, Jan. 22, 1965; Lemeshev in *Ekonomicheskaia gazeta*, Sept. 26, 1964, p. 29; Zlomanov in *ibid.*, Feb. 10, 1965, p. 5; Emelianov in *Ekonomicheskie nauki*, No. 1, 1965, pp. 7-8.

Home Truths on the Farm: The Literary Mirror

By Ronald Hingley

This inquiry represents an attempt to tap recent Soviet literature for evidence about the condition of Soviet agriculture in the last years of Khrushchev's rule. There is good authority for believing that such an investigation might be valuable. "Soviet economic journals are handicapped in dealing with farming questions, which is doubtless why the best material about the village appears in the literary monthlies." So writes Professor Alec Nove in a recent essay, "The Peasants in Soviet Literature since Stalin." [1] This has been the starting point for the present paper, in which some of the works discussed by Mr. Nove are reconsidered, and some startling new material, which has appeared since his article was written, is introtroduced.

The author of Under Soviet Skins (*London, Hamish Hamilton, 1961*), The Undiscovered Dostoyevsky (*same publisher, 1962*) *and numerous contributions to this as well as other American and British publications, Mr. Hingley is currently lecturing on Russian language and literature at St. Antony's College, Oxford University, England. This article is a condensed and updated version of a Radio Free Europe broadcast written last August.*

[1] Alec Nove, *Was Stalin Really Necessary?* (a collection of essays), London, George Allen & Unwin, 1964, pp. 12-13.

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One of the effects of this study is to show that Soviet novelists, short-story writers, and authors of sketches about rural life, did not wait for Khrushchev's fall to mount massive attacks against his agricultural policies. Yet to interpret these works merely as attacks upon Khrushchev's policies would surely be an error for (as will be shown further on) the writings frequently address themselves to the *fundamental* ills of the kolkhoz system in the USSR, to the "errors and distortions" to use a slightly faded phrase) which far predate the tenure of the former First Secretary. It is safe to conclude, therefore, that whatever the changes that have taken place since Khrushchev's ouster—such as the end to the division of party organizations into rural and industrial sections, the chanelling of more effective capital investment into agriculture, and so on—they have only superficially affected the conditions described in so many recent Soviet literary works.

Without Professor Nove's authority one might have hesitated in putting forward this sort of material as a sociological source, since much of it is avowedly fiction. Yet it does pass a certain crude test of reliability which may be thought a useful rule of thumb in attempting to assess competing versions of "Soviet actuality." Wherever there is a conflict of evidence—and that is certainly often enough—*the less edifying version is the more likely to be true.* This maxim tends, perhaps, to apply to human affairs in general, but its usefulness as a guide to Soviet practices seems particularly great.

Judged by this yardstick, recent Soviet rural fiction is indeed a reliable indication of fact, for there is a remarkable absence of traditional edifying varnish about many of the recent specimens. Gone are the days when all young lovers in Soviet rural novels were entranced by thoughts of socialist competition and production statistics. The world that is depicted today is sometimes stark and grim, sometimes pastoral and mundane, and frequently enlivened by incursions into absurdity.

To be sure, the old-style Soviet bucolic idyll has not been entirely discarded, but it no longer holds the field alone as it did in the days of Stalin. The rural works which are now read and discussed in the USSR are those of the unedifying variety. As will be shown, it is very much the world of Aunt Ada Doom and of something nasty in the collective woodshed.[2]

Fact and Fiction

One of the most outspoken items to appear in recent years was the story "Round and About" by F. Abramov, which was published in the January 1963 issue of the Leningrad journal *Neva.*[3] Abramov is no novice in this field. As long ago as 1954 he was denouncing the rosy picture of the Russian village painted by novelists of the Stalin era such as Babaievski and Galina Nikolaieva. "Round and About" is the reverse of all that. Appearing hard on the heels of Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich,* it is a less impressive sample of literary art. But as a political and social document it puts even Solzhenitsyn's masterpiece in the shade.

Abramov outbids Solzhenitsyn in two ways. First collectivization remains a live issue, whereas the camps described by Solzhenitsyn are now, at least in their Stalinist form, a thing of the past.

Secondly, Abramov breaks the convention whereby any description of abuses in a Soviet work of fiction is made to refer to the past, if only to a few years before the time of writing, with the implication that "of course things are better now." By setting his story in 1962 Abramov makes it clear that he is giving a running commentary on current events, not a piece of history.

Curiously enough, Abramov follows the "one day" technique adopted by Solzhenitsyn. He describes a day in the life of a collective farm chairman called Mysovski, the thirteenth chairman of the farm, "New Life," since the War. The unlucky number is not accidental—nor is the name that is sarcastically given to the farm.

When his day begins, Mysovski has just been given orders to put his peasants on a crash program of gathering pea-bines for silage. His morning starts in true Cold Comfort style with toothache, mud and rain. None of the peasants are in evidence. Many of them turn out to be stoking up the village bathhouse, where they intend to spend the day lounging in the steam. Some of the old women have gone gathering mushrooms. And of the two tractor-drivers, one is stuck in a ditch, while the other has turned up to work—drunk. Mysovski manages to mobilize seven lively young milkmaids, his only shock troops. He has gone to great trouble recruiting these girls while they were still at school, and

[2] See Stella Gibbons, *Cold Comfort Farm,* London, Longmans, 1932. (A parody on farm novels, in which Aunt Ada Doom is a ridiculous old grandmother who keeps talking about seeing "something nasty in the woodshed"—Ed.)

[3] Translated into English by David Floyd under the titles *One Day in the "New Life,"* (New York, F. A. Praeger, 1963) and *The Dodgers* (London, Pall Mall, 1963); also translated by George Reavey (Grove Press).

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it had taken him months to break down their resistance to joining the farm:

Even if the girl herself was ready to join, her mother would hit the roof. "What! My daughter mess around in muck? Was it for this that my man and I sweated our guts out and educated her?"

This illustrates the general unwillingness to join the farms—found especially among young men, who can find better jobs doing forestry work. The only surplus product on Mysovski's farm is marriageable girls.

Other sordid details brought out in this savage little story include the miserably low pay of the farm-workers and the plight of elderly peasants, without pensions, who may be forced to go begging. Then there is the fact that a peasant, having no "passport," cannot travel freely inside the country unless he has first been cleared by hordes of parasitical officials. And to add insult to injury, there is the Soviet habit of speaking about agriculture as if it were a branch of armed conflict, with the peasant stuck permanently in the trenches.

At the end of 1962 and the beginning of 1963 the Leningrad journal *Neva* was acting as the pacemaker for outspoken rural fiction. In the December number immediately preceding the issue containing Abramov's story, *Neva* had published Part One of a novel by Ivan Stadniuk called *People Are Not Angels*. This deals with some of the horrors of the 1930's as they affected the countryside—the antikulak campaign, injustice, prison, famine and forced labor camps. Stadniuk's basic attitude seems to be more ambiguous than Abramov's, and there appears in places to be an unspoken implication that all these outrages were ultimately necessary and justified. Still, Stadniuk's Soviet reader was able to learn, for the first time from a Soviet source, basic facts about his own history which for decades had been freely available in the West—though denounced at the time as capitalist fabrications by Soviet spokesmen and Western fellow-travelers.

In early 1963, *Neva* yielded its place as pioneer in the forthright handling of agricultural absurdities to the usual front-runner, the Moscow monthly *Novyi mir*. These were difficult days for Soviet journals which strove for some degree of honest representation, because of the witch-hunt in the cultural world which started with Khrushchev's violent outbursts against abstract painting in December 1962, and soon spread to the other arts as well.

Novyi mir, for years the leading "liberal" organ, battled on in the face of difficulties. It had been the first to publish Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, in November 1962, a period of extreme relaxation. Though the novel is mainly a study of a concentration camp, the hero—Ivan Denisovich Shukhov—is a peasant. The story also contains a number of scathing references to collective farm conditions, notably to the deterioration in the peasant's diet under collectivization and to the fact that the villagers found it more profitable to make shoddy carpets than raise crops.

Then again, in January 1963, *Novyi mir* published Solzhenitsyn's "Matryona's Home," a short story set in a Russian village. This is a minor landmark in village literature, not so much for its total lack of edifying political messages or because of the unvarnished picture which it paints of Russian village life, as because it is on a higher literary level than the utilitarian, mundane art practiced by many Soviet rural writers.

As late as March 1963, and in the very number which published Khrushchev's vitriolic speech of March 8 attacking liberal writers, *Novyi mir* was still the vehicle for some very plain speaking about the Russian village. In small print near the end of the volume there appears a piece by Leonid Ivanov, "In my Homeland," which has not attracted much attention, but which is about as outspoken as anything so far mentioned here. It is a completely straightforward account of a tour of villages in the Kalinin Oblast. Ivanov, a resident of Siberia for many years, is describing his reactions on a visit to his birthplace—and bitter reactions they are, as will be seen below.

The witch-hunt of early 1963 led to some denunciations even more ferocious than Nikita Khrushchev's statement of March 8. But the fuss petered out, and soon the publication of outspoken rural literature began again. "On the Irtysh," a long story by S. Zalygin published in *Novyi mir* in January 1964, should be mentioned here, though it will be discussed further below. It is a piece of what may be called pure fiction, in the sense that the characters and setting are imaginary and that there is a definite plot. Rural literature comes in various shapes, for at the other end of the scale from Zalygin are writers such as Leonid Ivanov describing actual places and people and giving them what appear to be their true names in a piece of direct reportage.

Both these genres are important, but it may be that, as a source on the Russian village, a

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third genre—that of the *ocherk* or sketch—is at least as instructive. This falls between straight reportage *à la* Ivanov and "pure" fiction such as "On the Irtysh," "Matryona's Home," and *People Are Not Angels*. The setting is generally an imaginary one (its name does not appear on the map) and the characters also purport to be fictitious. There is no real plot in this type of writing. It is episodic and didactic. It may be written in the third person, or it may be written in the name of a narrator who appears to drift amiably about the countryside talking to people, absorbing and dispensing rural wisdom.

Abramov's "Round and About" belongs to this intermediate genre. But the genre itself was pioneered by Valentin Ovechkin, whose main writings appeared between 1952 and 1956. Since then the mantle of Ovechkin as doyen of Soviet agricultural critics seems to have fallen on Yefim Dorosh, who first appeared in the second volume of the *Literary Moscow* almanac.[4] In recent years Dorosh has published several long sketches about his imaginary area of "Raigorod." An installment in the June 1964 issue of *Novyi mir* was called "Rain and Sun Mixed" and had clearly been held up for several years, since it is dated 1959; some of Dorosh's Raigorod material dealing with later years had already appeared. The delay is understandable because this particular piece is exceptionally hard-hitting.

The Good Old Days

Soviet spokesmen are prone to warn against judging the modern Soviet farming community from the works of Nekrasov, Gogol and Tolstoy. But must 19th-century Russian literature be left *entirely* out of account in a study of the modern Soviet village? On the contrary, many of the Soviet writers to whom we have been referring have a keen historical sense, and often choose to illuminate a scene on a Soviet collective farm with a parallel from 19th-century literature.

Such references may be purely jocular, as in an exchange of remarks retailed by Yefim Dorosh. The pay of a collective farm chairman, it appears, is calculated on the number of farm workers under his command. One such chairman says that if he could only have 35 more hands on his books, his salary would rise by 100 (old) rubles a month: "Better buy some dead souls," is the shrewd comment of one of his colleagues.

But such references are not usually made in joke. The same writer, for example, portrays a gruesome scene where a herd of cattle perishes because the beasts had been allowed to gorge themselves on clover just after rain had fallen. The error had occurred through following the orders of a new party secretary. Dorosh describes this as a scene of "Poshekhonian idiocy."[5] Here he is referring to that grotesque study of life on a Russian estate before the emancipation of the serfs, *Old Days in Poshekhonye*, by the celebrated satirist of the Tsarist system, Saltykov-Shchedrin. To any Russian reader this is pungent comment indeed, not least because Saltykov-Shchedrin, as an opponent of Tsarism, has been canonized in Soviet literary hagiography.

Another parallel with Russian 19th-century literature is drawn by I. Vinogradov in his essay on Valentin Ovechkin. Emphasizing the importance of the "sketch" as a genre in Soviet literature of the 1950's, Vinogradov points out that:

> *Something of this sort has occurred in literary history before. For instance, in the 70's of the last century the attention of Russian society was also taken up by the sketch. So-called Populist (narodnik) literature came into prominence, and was devoted to studying the life of the peasantry, its outlook and its needs.*[6]

That a Soviet critic should claim the new wave of Soviet rural writers as heirs of the Populists indeed shows how far recent outspokenness has gone. For the Populists, it will be remembered, were the forerunners of the Socialist Revolutionary Party, which was in direct political conflict with the Marxists. It was the Populists and their Socialist Revolutionary successors who championed the Russian peasant, whereas the Marxists pinned their main political hopes on the urban proletariat. Marxist opinion of the peasantry, regarded as a comparatively reactionary force, has been expressed in the often-repeated formula, "the idiocy of rural life." But it would never occur to the rural writers considered here to invoke this slogan. They come out in open championship of the peasants against the town-dweller, and thus are in a sense the true heirs of Popu-

[4] For a discussion of this almanac see Tom Scriven, "The Literary Opposition," *Problems of Communism*, January-February 1958.

[5] Yefim Dorosh, "Rain and Sunshine," *Novyi mir* (henceforth cited as *NM*), (Moscow), No. 6, 1964, p. 76.

[6] I. Vinogradov, "The Village Sketches of Valentin Ovechkin," *NM*, No. 6, 1964, p. 207.

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lism. Moreover, since the Populists were in conflict with the Russian government of their day, the question might arise as to how far contemporary Soviet rural writers constitute a politically disaffected group. In fact there is no reason to think that they do, since their main desire is to make collectivized and state agriculture work—not to dismantle it. Still, it is remarkable that they can openly regard themselves to some extent as the heirs of such predecessors—and flayers of governmental methods of their day—as Saltykov-Shchedrin and Gleb Uspenski. This may be thought an honorable claim, and one which they are entitled to make. They now enjoy so much freedom of speech, by Soviet standards, that they may even hope one day to write as freely as a Saltykov-Shchedrin or a Gleb Uspenski. By Western standards this may not mean very much, but it would be more than anything permitted up to now.

If there is one Russian 19th-century author above all whose spirit seems to preside over the less decorous proceedings depicted in Soviet rural literature, it is curiously enough not a Populist but a writer of conservative views. This is Nikolai Leskov, that skillful exploiter of the riotous and outrageous potentialities of

The Chairman and the Farmer . . .

According to the *kolkhoz* records, Pete Deviatyi was disabled and unfit for work. He had reached 67 last winter—Ananyi Yegorovich [the kolkhoz chairman] seemed to recall some such talk in the farm office. But, on the other hand, who did not know that there was not another man in the village who could equal him in strength. Not for nothing had they labeled him Pete the Bulldozer! . . .

There was yet another odd thing about Deviatyi: he took one day off a week. And you could do what you liked on that day, but you wouldn't shift Pete from where he was! It was true that they allowed for this on the kolkhoz—after all, on a normal day Pete did four men's work. But shortly after the war, when he got sent to the timber camps, they showed him no mercy: for not turning out to work during a special month's campaign, Pete was sentenced. But when he returned from the camps Pete remained true to himself.

"Aren't you scared, Nikitich, that they'll send you down the line again?"—the other farmworkers chaffed him.

"No, my lads, I'm not scared. The working class takes a day off and is right to do so. It raises productivity."

That's the sort of chap Pete the Bulldozer was! . . .

And now, as he approached Deviatyi's plot, Ananyi Yegorovich could only shake his head: My God, how much the old man had managed to do with his bad legs. And all in the course of about a year and a half! . . . Instead of a little row of onions, such as you find near every house, here was a whole plantation of onions. And these really *were* onions —far better than what the kolkhoz produced: the tops were greener and juicier, and they lay over the rows just like a fat sedge, while the onions themselves were as hard and as healthy as turnips.

Beyond the rows of onions were glass frames with cucumbers, a vegetable for which there was also a great demand and which the local collective farms had still not managed to grow properly. Then there was a long row of potatoes. And that was all: no sign of any row of rye or barley or of a little patch of vetch and oats mixed, such as other kolkhozniks had.

And there was something else that caught Ananyi Yegorovich's attention. In Pete's garden literally every inch was being cultivated. There was no pathway, such as the other houses had. The woodshed and the bathhouse had been moved to the other side of the fence behind the house. And even the little path leading from the porch to the gate, which divided the rows of onions in two, had been made so narrow that there was no room for a cart to go along it.

"Yes," thought Ananyi Yegorovich gloomily, "see how much the old man has managed to do. By his own efforts. In something less than two years. He lives well and doesn't ask anyone for help. Meanwhile we . . . we've been trying to put the kolkhoz on its feet for fifteen years. . . ."

The owner of the house—a big, tough old man, without a hat, with his hair shaved down smooth, a sheepskin coat thrown over his shoulders and short felt boots on his feet—came out onto the porch. . . . "Will you come into the cottage or are you in a hurry?"

"I'm in a hurry."

"Well, you know best. But I'll sit down."—And holding on to the doorpost, Pete let himself down heavily onto the step. "Nowadays I can only deal

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provincial and rustic Russia. Something of the spirit of Leskov is to be found in the absurd bucolic scenes painted in early Soviet novels by Leonid Leonov and Boris Pilniak. Moreover, the "broad" treatment of bucolic humors and absurdities, again with a lavish use of dialect and idiosyncratic speech in the manner of Leskov, runs through Sholokhov's rustic saga, *Virgin Soil Upturned*, where, especially in the second volume, it is sometimes allowed to degenerate into facetiousness.

Leskov's spirit continues to pervade Soviet literature; that such episodes can be tragic as well as comic is shown by the grotesque incident of the dismantled hut, towed over a level-crossing by a gang of drunken muzhiks on two sledges drawn by a purloined tractor, in Solzhenitsyn's "Matryona's Home." This is the scene in which the heroine is killed.

Another scene, also tragic in its outcome, is somewhat similar in that it again involves the dismantling of a peasant hut. This appears in a story or short novel to which reference was made above, Zalygin's "On the Irtysh." It describes the beginnings of collectivization in a Siberian village in 1931. A disgruntled muzhik called Alexander Udartsev lives in a hut on a cliff above the river. The cliff is gradually collapsing, and he fears that one day his home may topple down into the river. He appeals to

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. . . A Story About Conscience

with this dampness by means of ants. The old lady has gone off again to look for an ants' nest."

"Don't onions do any good?"

"What? Onions? No, they don't help. What's more, I don't like 'em onions. And my old lady doesn't like 'em much either. Grass . . .," the old chap added skeptically.

"But I thought you were a great lover of greenstuff. Just look at the plantation you've got here!"

"No, that's not for myself. We grow that to sell," Pete replied with just the same straightforward frankness.

Ananyi Yegorovich began to lose his patience:

"But what about your conscience—is that all right? Don't you find any difficulty in indulging in private business in your old age?"

"Sure it's difficult. It's difficult to get hold of horses. See how heavy the onions are this year. But it's no good asking the foreman for transport—without a bottle he just doesn't hear."

"And do you give him one?"

"I do. At first I used to give him one for the horse's tail, but now he demands one for each hoof. It comes pretty dear," Pete sighed.

"Now listen to me, Comrade Deviatyi! You shut up this shop as quick as you can. If you don't we'll shut it for you."

"You won't shut it," objected Pete, just as calmly as before.

"We will. You just see! What do you think, then—that we're going to stand by and watch while you operate a private business under the very roof of the kolkhoz? If *you* haven't got a conscience, we'll find ways."

Pete was silent for a while.

"You talk a lot about conscience. . . ." Pete again went silent, had a rub at his knees that were bent back in a right-angle, and then suddenly burst out in a smile.

"Well, as for conscience, it goes something like this, Chairman. Here in a certain collective farm there's an old man living with his old woman. They're on their own, they've got no children. Well, something happens to the old chap—that means he's sick. The old woman, it's pretty obvious, she's in tears: 'How are we going to live? There's not a kopek in the house.' 'Never mind,' says the old man, 'we shall get by. We've got no money, but we've got lots of conscience. How much conscience have you and I earned in the last twenty-nine years?—he says. 'Go down to the barn and get a sack of it and take it down to the shop,' he says."

"Shall we leave the fairy-tale for now?"—Ananyi Yegorovich broke in, though without so much heat as before.

"Oh no, you just hear me out," said Pete. "It's not a tale I've made up. . . . Well, the old woman humped the sack of conscience onto her back and went to the shop. But in an hour she was back, weeping. 'They won't take our conscience,' she says. 'They want money.' 'All right, then,' says the old man, 'go to the kolkhoz. That's where they issued us our conscience. That's where they'll trade it in.' But they wouldn't take it there either. . . ."

There was nothing left for Ananyi Yegorovich to do but swallow Pete's story in silence. What could he say in reply? What would *he* have been doing in the old man's place?

—From One Day in the "New Life," by F. Abramov, New York, F. A. Praeger, 1963, pp. 113-21.

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other members of the newly collectivized community to help him move the hut. They refuse, whereupon Alexander sets fire to the communal barn and runs away into the *taiga*, deserting his family. In a series of vivid scenes the fire is extinguished, and the enraged peasants advance in a body on Alexander's hut. After a clash with a fierce old grandfather, they push it over the precipice into the Irtysh, thus leaving the family homeless. "It was a good house," one of the peasants reflects. "We'll have to move the people into some other house now . . . . Have to." He thought a bit more. "So this is the sort of start we've got off to with our communal life!" [7]

"On the Irtysh" is better written than Abramov's "Round and About," and it is almost as notable a political document. True, the events are set thirty years earlier. But the story cuts deeper, and is more than a catalogue of current grievances, for it strikes against the concept of collectivization at its roots. If this is "the sort of start we've got off to," Zalygin's peasant seems to be saying, what hope is there of any good ever coming from collectivization? Moreover, the persecution of the kulaks comes in for mercilessly hostile analysis in the description of the tragic fate of the hero, Stephan Chauzov, who is eventually turned out of his home.

As "On the Irtysh" shows, the new wave of farm literature maintains the tradition of "destalinization" found widely in Soviet literature since 1956 and before. This is also a feature of Ye. Gerasimov's story, "Where the Stream Flows" (1964), which presents the narrator's reminiscences of farm conditions in the 1930's when he had been an aspiring young journalist. Blissfully ignorant of farming, he would make flying visits to state farms and send in adverse reports to his paper:

It was enough to pop into the (farm) office, get the latest report from the planning clerk and make one of three possible deductions: either the farm had criminally delayed sowing, or it was criminally marking time, or it was going ahead with criminal slowness.[8]

Experienced and successful farm directors disappeared into the concentration camps as the result of such reports by an ignorant youth.

Criticism of the Soviet past goes with surprising tolerance towards the more distant past —both Tsarist and the period of pre-collectivization. This attitude may express the interest of an antiquary, as where Leonid Ivanov recalls the history of the Kalinin Oblast with nostalgia. He explains that Chekhov had visited a local village and taken the subject for his *Artist's Story* from there.[9] So, a little later, had Chekhov's friend, the landscape painter Levitan. The hordes of Khan Baty had passed nearby at the time of the Tartar invasions. Similarly, Dorosh recalls the Russian chronicles with reference to his imaginary Raigorod area. Even 700 years ago "this river must have been just the same as it is now," he notes, "if the armies standing on its banks could throw stones at each other as the Chronicler says." [10]

Many such references to the past are charming in their leisurely nostalgia, and those just mentioned lack any political flavor. But references to the past can also contain poisoned barbs directed at the present. It is even possible for Dorosh to contrast the more efficient methods of the *pomeshchiki* (landlords of Tsarist times) with the wasteful practices of the modern collective farm. One such disaster has already been mentioned—the death of the herd of cows, allowed to gorge themselves on damp clover. This incident occurred during a weekend, when the farm chairman was off-duty. On this Dorosh comments:

Can one conceive an (old-style) landowner keeping a bailiff who resided permanently in town and went off home like urban office-workers even when summer work was in full swing?" [11]

There are also favorable references to small private farmers—whether of the NEP period or of Tsarist times is often left vague. On the collective farm in the Udomlia District described by Leonid Ivanov, ploughing is impeded by masses of pebbles and boulders, relics of the ice age:

Private farmers had their own way of coping with this. They collected all the small stones from their strips and took them to the boundary lines, thereby creating a solid boundary between their own and their neighbors' strips. And the bigger boulders were buried in the ground.[12]

Now no-one can be bothered and there are no

[7] S. Zalygin, "On the Irtysh," *NM*, No. 2, 1964, p. 12.
[8] Ye Gerasimov, "Where the Stream Flows," *NM*, No. 6, 1964, p. 129.
[9] Leonid Ivanov, "In My Homeland," *NM*, No. 3, 1963, p. 181.
[10] Dorosh, "Rain and Sunshine," p. 12.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 76.
[12] Ivanov, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

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machines for clearing stones as there should be.

Again, Dorosh contrasts wasteful modern methods, based on a plan, with the practice of the peasant in former times. "When he hadn't enough manure he left part of his land unploughed, so as not to waste the time and energy." Before sowing he carted out the quantity of manure he needed. From one well-manured field he collected a bigger harvest than he would have had from a much larger area on the amount of dung available to him. "This illiterate peasant was behaving very rationally, as it turns out." [13] Similarly all sorts of herbs were grown for the market in the old days. Now they are neglected. "Why shouldn't people take up growing herbs nowadays? Why shouldn't the collective farms enrich themselves—just as enterprising local muzhiks once did?" [14]

So many potentially productive crops are neglected. "Where," asks Dorosh, "are the orchards of the central Russian plain? What's happened to the Vladimir cherry which may have been brought from Kiev by Bogoliubski [Andrei Bogoliubski, 12th-century Prince of Vladimir]? Where's the Antonov apple which used to be sold straight from the cart in autumn?" [15]

On occasion even the practices of the 1930's are invoked as a stick with which to beat the modern collective farm:

In prewar years Udomlia District used to send a lot of hay and a fair amount of grain to other parts. And they used to feed more cattle. In those days, too, pasture land was not wasted on growing green fodder for cattle—there were enough meadows and pastures.[16]

(This, incidentally, is one of a number of digs against Khrushchev's anti-ley farming campaign published while Khrushchev was still in power, thus enabling us to observe with hindsight the undercurrent of opposition that led to his downfall.)

Affectionate references to the Russian past—whether prewar, precollectivization or pre-Lenin—are not an entirely new phenomenon. All the same, taken in their context, examples such as those discussed here mark a real break with the staple Soviet propaganda procedure of abusing the Russian past. If one states how bad the past was often enough, the official reasoning seems to have been, people may eventually come to believe that the present must be good. A break with such procedures can only be welcomed. The most startling feature of the break, however, is the inversion of the official propaganda device and its use as a stick with which to beat the present.

"Cold Comfort" Farms

As mentioned above, one Soviet critic has compared the new school of Soviet rural writers with the Populist authors of rustic sketches appearing in the 1870's. Like the Populists of old these modern writers often champion countryman against townsman. And the peasant still needs a champion. In the worker-peasant alliance which theoretically forms the basis of the revolutionary state, he has always been made the junior partner.

This thesis our latter-day Populists are unwilling to accept. In "A Dry Summer," Yefim Dorosh indignantly points out that villagers were systematically being charged higher prices in the shops than townspeople—and this not because of additional transport charges, or anything of that kind, but as a matter of policy. By the time the article appeared (in 1961), this particular abuse had been abolished, but the peasant's junior status remained.

A similar point is made later in the same sketch about a married couple, the wife a hospital nurse and the husband a mechanic. They are non-peasants living in the country, and their conditions are considerably better than those of the peasants around them. But *why*? (Always a favorite Russian word, "why" is heard particularly often among rural commentators.) Dorosh writes of this couple:

They earn enough from their work to live at ease, spend their spare time studying, and bring up their baby properly. But after all, nurses and mechanics, essential as these people are, only provide services for the main workers on the land—peasant women such as Katia, Sonia or Agrafena. . . . Why, to put it crudely, can't they live on their work when it's the most important in the village? And why does every laborer at Uzhbol [a local village] spend all his spare time working his private plot, looking after his cow and taking his produce to town? Far from having time to study, he hasn't even time to wipe baby's nose.[17]

For decades the peasant's private plot has

[13] Dorosh, "A Dry Summer," *NM*, No. 7, 1961, p. 36.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 30.
[15] Dorosh, "Rain and Sunshine," p. 77.
[16] Ivanov, *op. cit.*, p. 184.
[17] Dorosh, "A Dry Summer," p. 17.

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been a sore point with Soviet theoreticians. Western observers have shown the large proportion of Soviet agricultural production that derives from these tiny scraps of land on which the peasant feels himself his own master. Now Soviet voices are saying the same thing in bolder tones. Thus I. Vinogradov:

A man only does his job properly when he's master of his fate and feels he's his own boss. We've often read in sketches and articles how some old man—and an invalid at that, so that he's long been rated as past work by the collective farm office—brings off absolute miracles on his bit of land. He makes a decent living and gets on without asking for help, and gradually builds himself up. All this is based on the private plot and the odd spot of trade. Of course we say he's a typical private trader and we go on about the acquisitive element getting out of hand and so on. But still, it's interesting to see what goes on on this private individual's bit of land . . . the whole thing properly thought out. You seem to sense not only economic calculation, but also the ability to use all the right agricultural techniques.[18]

Dorosh makes the same point, and claims to have discovered yet another of those "vicious circles," in which Soviet agriculture seems to be so rich. "For the collective farmer to be master in his own collective farm," one of Dorosh's characters argues, "he must know that it's there, and not on his private plot, that his living is earned. But in order to earn that much he has first to become master in his own farm." The argument continues in a rather starry-eyed vein: "It's time to get rid of the clash which is sometimes encountered between the interests of the collective farmer and the interests of the state."[19] It is also important, Dorosh suggests, to do away with the patronizing attitude of the townsman towards the collective farm-worker. Anyone who has heard the condescension with which members of the Soviet bourgeoisie sometimes refer to "our kolkhozniks" will utter a hearty "hear hear" on their behalf.

Outside observers might argue that the clash between the state and the peasant is built into the collective farm system, and that it will not disappear until the system itself disappears. But even in today's relatively free conditions people cannot say openly that the collective farm system needs liquidating. So when the new agricultural writers pursue the problem of what is wrong, they cannot put forward radical solutions. They are freer to answer the question *Who is to blame?* than to say *What is to be done?* (to quote the titles of two important 19th-century Russian novels.)

Who, in fact, *is* to blame in their opinion? They give many answers, but the most common seems to be District (*raion*) Headquarters—*i.e.*, the party and local government organs to which the individual farms are immediately responsible.

"District" is depicted as a great talking factory. What more typical of District than to

[18] Vinogradov, *op. cit.*, p. 227.

[19] Dorosh, "Rain and Sunshine," p. 57.

РЕВИЗОР: — У меня с вами хлопот полон рот!

Рисунок Е. ЩЕГЛОВА

SHADES OF GOGOL? . . .

Inspector: My mouth is full with your troubles!

—From Krokodil (Moscow), July 20, 1964.

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summon a gigantic conference on artificial insemination when harvesting is in full swing in a year of drought?

What is the point of . . . collecting together in the middle of the day all collective farm chairmen, managers of individual sections and secretaries of party organs and discussing with them a problem so remote from the job at hand? If there must be a conference right now, I think it could only be about how to save the cattle in the difficult winter that lies ahead.[20]

District officials are usually townspeople who know nothing of farm matters, and are usually moved on before they have time to learn.

In the seven years I've been coming here we've had four secretaries of the District Committee. The office has been reorganized several times. It was once the District Land Department and now it's called the Inspection. There sit two or three learned agronomists, blissfully vegetating in their everlasting office where nothing changes but the posters on the walls.[21]

The only harvests that interest these armchair farmers are harvests of reports that can be made to look good on paper—the so-called *rabota na svodku,* roughly translated, "work for the filing cabinet." Not being local people, they ignore local needs and never consider consulting the man on the spot. Thus the sowing plan for Udomlia District is based on the theoretical area available for sowing as reported many years back. No matter that a great part of the land is now a mass of elder or has otherwise become useless. Such details do not concern the agricultural bureaucrats at District.

It seems unfair to place all the blame on District, when District receives its orders from Province, Province from Republic, and so on. The rural writers go nearer to the heart of things when they also attack the general martial spirit in which Soviet agriculture is run. One of Dorosh's approved figures in agricultural administration "thinks shouting, commands, and talking down to people is not good party style. And anyway the District Committee isn't a military headquarters." [22]

Too many military commands? Is this a clue to the relative failure of Soviet agriculture when compared with industry? In a large factory some sort of discipline is essential, which is possibly why Soviet authoritative methods have had success on the factory floor. But in the collective farm, where variable factors, especially the weather, have so much play, everything depends on the individual laborer's devotion. Threats and exhortation can never be enough. Not many Soviet villagers are going to sit up all night with a sick collective calf, however many directives are showered on them from above. Indeed, as one of the rural writers says, "the very word 'boss' seems to me out of place in a collective farm, where at least in theory, if not always in practice, each of the members is a co-owner on a basis of equality." [23] It is time, as one of these authors says somewhere with an irony not necessarily unconscious, that the peasant felt himself as much the owner of his collective farm as the Soviet worker does of his factory.

Men and Policies

One of the main troubles, as foreign observers have long been complaining, is the extent to which Soviet agriculture has become a verbal operation. The rural writers realize this, and it is significant that the arch-villain in their eyes is so often the Soviet newspaper. On Dorosh's pages the very word newspaper reads like a term of abuse. A farm chairman "talks correctly in what you might call an educated way, but he is a man of few words, all of them bookish, or more accurately, newspaperish." [24] On one occasion the newspapers played up some scandal concerning a village priest. For the villagers this matter, whatever it is, is part of their lives, not something from which they are separated by a high wall. But to the journalists such parish-pump affairs are a foreign land where they simply do not "speak the language."[25]

The Soviet billboards also come under attack:

How out of place, how tactless are those brightly-colored plywood boards that were stuck up last winter in the middle of town and in the town park, with their illiterate drawings and immodest, strident captions calling on people to collect a rich harvest, produce a legendary quantity of milk and sell the state 2½ times as much as is provided for on the plan.[26]

[20] Dorosh, "A Dry Summer," p. 27.
[21] Dorosh, "Rain and Sunshine," p. 13.
[22] Dorosh, "A Dry Summer," p. 27.
[23] Dorosh, "Rain and Sunshine," p. 38.
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 46.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 43.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

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The tendency to reduce farming to a string of words is not confined to District Headquarters, but can also corrupt the lower levels, as is demonstrated in the case of one "bad" collective farm chairman, called Chernov, described by Dorosh. Instead of putting his farm in good working order,

. . . [he] toured around giving lectures, wrote articles, wrote a pamphlet, though if you looked into the main point of a collective farm's existence—its success in agricultural production—his achievements there weren't much.

Again:

Though, for instance, the young pigs were dying . . . the land was badly neglected as ever and hardly any buildings were being put up, the Chairman was asked to appear on television, the District Museum displayed his portrait and put him up for an award of the Ministry of Culture, while a Moscow institute asked him to take part in a discussion on the problems of collective farm economics.

Chernov boasts that to look at him no-one would take him for a farmer at all.[27]

Chernov is shown to suffer from that vice of officials all over the world—empire-building. Here he has been helped by the policy of amalgamating collective farms into larger units, which leaves the door open to a chairman with expansive ideas. Thus to his original domain at Rzhishche (not a very "strong" farm anyway) Chernov has added six neighboring farms —the whole complex being given "the pompous name Russia." And all this "just for effect and to maintain the hectic atmosphere surrounding a so-called 'progressive' chairman."[28]

For officials like Chernov farming becomes solely a matter of abstract ideas, rather than of crops. When the milk yield falls, their instinct is to have an article printed in the local newspaper recommending the improvement of mass-education among milkmaids. Not a word about the drought that is the cause of the trouble. The call for more propaganda among milkmaids seems to be the Soviet equivalent of praying for rain.

Rural writers have also criticized specific Soviet farming policies originating on a much higher level than the District. One of these has already been mentioned—the drive to amalgamate farms into larger units, so that the overall number of collective farms has been systematically reduced during the last decade, and the average size considerably increased. One of Dorosh's characters comments:

The bosses are in a hurry with this amalgamation and keep putting on the pressure. All they're interested in is getting the weak collective farm off their hands.[29]

Amalgamating the farms is an administrative convenience to District, which can more effectively control 9 or 10 farms than 30 or 40. But there is little evidence of any other advantages.

Another current grievance is the compulsion to grow corn (maize) regardless of the suitability of local conditions. This shows the degree of freedom with which Soviet citizens can now criticize agricultural policies, for it is no secret that the corn policy was sponsored by Nikita Khrushchev and pushed by him for at least a decade. In fact, it would be running against the trends of agricultural fiction to describe a successful corn crop just now. "We walk over corn fields—low, with pallid leaves that look somehow crumpled and can hardly be distinguished among the weeds," says Dorosh. And he takes a side-swipe at a more fashionable agricultural campaign of the moment—the fertilizer drive:

Liuda [a member of the collective farm in question] says they treated the corn with some sort of chemicals but the rain came and washed them away, the corn became weed-infested but there was no-one to weed it now because the hay harvest was on. If they'd sowed oats . . . they'd have had no trouble.[30]

Yet another policy which comes under fire is the great official onslaught on the so-called "ley-farming system," once the pride of Academician Williams and applied in Stalin's Russia without regard to local conditions. This involves sowing croplands with fodder grass from time to time to restore the fertility of the soil. Nothing if not thorough in their methods, Soviet agricultural policy-makers, with Khrushchev at their head, flung themselves on this time-honored system of crop-rotation with a vehemence unusual even in Soviet agricultural "campaigns." This happened early in 1962, when those addicted to crop-rotation were pub-

[27] Dorosh, "Rain and Sunshine," pp. 64-65.
[28] *Ibid.*
[29] Dorosh, "A Dry Summer," p. 25.
[30] Dorosh, "Rain and Sunshine," p. 50.

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licly disgraced and forced to recant. They were venomously lampooned in *Krokodil* and for a time outside observers might have thought that to have a single blade of grass or clover growing on a collective farm was almost a capital offense.

What was wrong was neither ley-farming itself nor the system of compulsory intensive cultivation of maize, beans and peas with which it was to be replaced, but the inflexibility of a system which imposed uniform agricultural procedures over a sixth of the earth's surface, with a climate ranging from the tundra of the arctic circle to the deserts of central Asia. Be this as it may, the cultivation of fodder-grasses is now being defended and cautious attempts are being made to ridicule the anti-ley farming campaign. For example, Ivanov describes seeing a large collective farm field which had been ploughed up earlier in the year and then abandoned. Why?

"Well, there was clover growing here" [an old man tells him]. "But in the spring our bosses took against it and set the tractor on it. Well up to 100 hectares they must have ploughed up, and then abandoned it." He made a gesture of dismissal and turned away from me. He must have thought I was some important official.

Ivanov discovers that the farm has a new chairman (a schoolmaster, not a peasant), who had been told to plough up the clover and to sow crops, though the farm had no seed corn.

This is the sort of state you get into. War has been declared on the ley-farming system, so they at once hurl themselves on the clover and plough it up with fantastic energy. The land can go to waste, just so long as you don't grow clover.[31]

One of the agricultural issues ventilated by all Soviet authorities is the need for the peasant to have a "material interest" in his work. Pay is indeed very much of an issue on the Soviet collective farm. Dorosh writes:

No-one guarantees the collective farmer a wage, so he must be given the opportunity to run his farm without loss—otherwise he'll get nothing. The funny thing is that for years now whenever the conversation at Raigorod . . . turns to agriculture, they go on about the amalgamating of farms, sending them chairmen from the town, the virtues of maize as fodder . . . but it doesn't occur to anyone to wonder how much the collective farm-laborer earns and whether he'll earn more if they join his farm up with others and send a new chairman.[32]

Dorosh wants to see farming put on a sound economic basis, with Soviet farms growing only crops that pay for themselves. Why should collective farmers have to produce milk at a loss just because the state needs it? Many crops are produced to order against the wishes of the growers, who have to bear the loss directly. In the miserable collective farms of Kalinin Province described by Ivanov in 1963, flax was the only crop that showed a profit—and even that was grown wastefully.[33] Dorosh puts forward the principle that a farm "can be run solely on the basis of economic factors and that only in wartime is it admissible to act absolutely without calculation apart from the need to win the battle."[34] As it is, farms are compelled to breed pigs under such conditions that they can buy pork more cheaply in the market than they can produce it themselves. And this they do on occasion, to fulfill their production quota under the plan—if V. Kochetov's recent novel, *The Obkom Secretary,* is any guide.

All this explains why so many young people prefer a job in industry, even when their heart is really in farming. "If I only knew that the collective farm would secure me a fixed wage, what the hell would I want with industry?," one of these defectors remarked to Ivanov.[35]

This study of the new wave of Soviet rural writers has considered the depressing practice of farming by panacea: Now the Virgin Lands are to be ploughed up, but with no measures against erosion. Now corn is to be planted pretty well everywhere except inside the kitchen sink. Now the day is to be saved by growing forests in the steppes; by abusing the Williams system of crop-rotation; by raising the price of the meat in the shops by 30 percent; or by dramatically increasing the production of fertilizers, or by winning over more milkmaids. To such official panaceas are added the notions of those at the Provincial and District levels. And from time to time at Union or Republican

[31] Ivanov, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

[32] Dorosh, "Rain and Sunshine," pp. 56-57.
[33] Ivanov, *op. cit.*, p. 186.
[34] Dorosh, "A Dry Summer," p. 7.
[35] Ivanov, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

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conferences some miracle-working pigman or dairymaid of humble origin is produced like a rabbit out of a hat and praised highly for inventing a new technique for increasing the size of a sow's litter or boosting the cream content of cow's milk.

Each of these events, it is suggested, represents the *turning of the corner*. From now on everything will be all right. The same things were being said about breeding rabbits for meat in the 1920's—and about countless other Soviet ground-nut schemes. A Soviet citizen who has lived through more than two or three of these crises soon begins to see that the function of each succeeding sensation is not to rid Soviet agriculture of crises, but to distract attention until the time comes for the next sensation.

Under the Stalinist regime, administrators were simply removed and replaced by an inexhaustible supply of fresh young enthusiasts. Now all, young and old, seem disillusioned and there is no system of replenishing tired blood.

But there are signs that the authorities have begun to realize the need for more flexibility in agricultural policies. At any rate they are now beginning to say that what works in one part of the country may not necessarily work in another. Does this mean an end of farming by panacea? Or will the cry "away with panaceas" become the last and most futile panacea of all?

BOOKS

Agriculture and Kremlinology

SIDNEY I. PLOSS: *Conflict and Decision Making in Soviet Russia.* Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1965.

Reviewed by Jerzy F. Karcz

THIS SIGNIFICANT and timely volume focuses on the central issue of Kremlinology: by whom and in what manner the major policy decisions are made in contemporary Soviet society. The fundamental importance of the topic has of course been underlined by the ouster of Khrushchev last October, though curiously enough this climactic event is completely ignored in a volume bearing a 1965 imprint.

Methodologically, the book is a chronological case study of various aspects of agricultural policy from 1953 through 1963. However, the subject serves only as a means to analyze conflict situations, and the underlying issues affecting the Soviet countryside are not investigated in depth. The author has plowed through an enormous mass of evidence dealing with ideological, political, economic and literary problems as they relate to agriculture, and he shows great ingenuity in handling the text as well as the implications of his materials. As a study in decision-making, the volume succeeds reasonably in illuminating the mechanics of important conflicts among top Soviet leaders; perhaps inevitably, it is less useful as a study of agricultural policy *per se* during a crucial decade.

In inquiring into the attitudes, backgrounds, *Weltanschauung* and policy affiliations of various antagonists, Mr. Ploss tends to see these attributes as polarized; his analyses of conflicts involve at one end a group of "liberalizers" or "reformers" led by Khrushchev, and at the other successive constellations of "conservatives." Khrushchev's claim to the reformist label is dated to the early postwar period (to some extent on the strength of his own evidence). In most of

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the conflicts a basic pattern of behavior is delineated and traced in detail: on the reformers' part, early groundwork at the personnel and organizational level is followed by efforts to widen support among the lower echelons of the elite through a campaign of mounting intensity in the daily and specialized press. The opposition counters at every step with proposals and counterproposals finally decided upon at the Presidium or the Central Committee level. There follows a realignment in strategic party and government posts.

FEW WILL QUARREL with Mr. Ploss' basic conclusions attributing major differences within the Soviet leadership to substantive issues (rather than to pure power politics), and noting the limitations thus imposed on the "chief executive" (as Khrushchev is labeled on p. 284). The author may also be right in his view that the latter's efforts to widen the arena of conflict in the face of mounting opposition (when he carried his fight from the party Presidium to the Central Committee) could exert profound influence on the future of the Soviet body politic. Yet one may agree with Mr. Ploss' general observations, while at the same time judging some aspects of his analysis questionable or at least oversimplified.

On the latter score, the reviewer takes issue with Mr. Ploss' methodological interpretation of every conflict in terms of the antinomy between "reform" and "conservatism." His adherence to this framework of analysis, combined with his disinterest in analyzing the intrinsic merits or demerits of given proposals, has consequences that he perhaps did not intend. One of these concerns the image of Khrushchev that emerges from the study. While the author remains formally impartial between the "reformers" and the "conservatives," the reader is likely to cheer steadily for the former First Secretary precisely because the opposition is made to appear so singularly unattractive. Little allowance is made for the possibility that Khrushchev might have erred on substantive issues or on matters of timing. Implicitly, his policies and proposals earn a stamp of approval and acquire an aura of consistency, desirability and respectability that would be hard to substantiate on the basis of known facts. In a sense, the case of Khrushchev *vs.* all oncomers is prejudged from the beginning.

THIS DIFFICULTY is further aggravated by the nature of the evidence examined. Much of the testimony on the "anti-party" group as well as on Khrushchev's own views comes from Nikita Sergeievich himself, and he certainly was not hesitant about disparaging the views of his opponents. None of the latter, however, has as yet had an opportunity to come forward with his own selection of unpublished speeches and memoranda. Under the circumstances it is impossible to be sure about the real motives of the "conservatives." Mr. Ploss is of course aware that the evidence is far from complete, but he is nonetheless disposed to accept Khrushchev's view of the case. For example, in explaining resistance to the reform of agricultural planning in 1954, he quotes Khrushchev to the effect that it was a lack of faith in peasant loyalty which prompted the opposition's view that "if we no longer planned . . . [sowings] from the center . . . we would lose our supply of grain" (p. 85). Possibly, but what if Khrushchev quoted his opponents out of context? Was it only—or even primarily—in its appraisal of civil loyalties that the opposition differed with the "reformers"? Instead, the opponents' case *could* have been based on a candid and reasonably accurate forecast of managerial behavior under a certain set of constraints (something like this happened in 1959-60 when regime policy led to widespread buying of grain from the government by farms located in the non-black-soil center). Hence, even in this instance where the proposed reform was manifestly sensible, it is conceivable that the opposition deserved more credit for rationality than Khrushchev allowed. Yet little room is left for any such consideration.

IT IS ALSO difficult at times to distinguish in the author's account between crucial and more peripheral issues. It could be argued, of course, that one dispute is as good as another when the primary focus is on the mechanics of conflict, its development and its resolution. Yet the merits of a particular case do affect the assessment of the opposition. For example, in 1959 the "reformists" reportedly concentrated on the issues of reorganizing agricultural administration and creating a kolkhoz federation. One wonders whether these problems deserved such high priority given the seriousness of other pressing issues such as resource allocation and village terms of trade. Since we are ignorant of the full plan proposed for a kolkhoz federation, it is also debatable whether the proposal amounted to an unqualified "liberalizing" measure, as the author infers. As described, the case of the opposition placed alternate emphasis on the conversion of collectives into state farms. Was this *always* a genuinely "conservative" proposal leading to the "enserfment of the rural population"? (p. 195). After all, labor income per man-day on state farms in 1959 exceeded that on the aver-

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age collective by 75 percent,[1] and the size of the peasants' private plots was not to be affected by conversion.

Gaps in the materials consulted led the author to create other faulty impressions as well. A recent study by Nancy Nimitz (completed too late to be taken into account by Mr. Ploss) quantifies within a reasonable margin of error the huge decline in grain stocks that took place under Khrushchev's stewardship.[2] Surely, such trends must have affected a few votes on several occasions regardless of ideological or other preferences. In comparison with Nikita Sergeievich, Malenkov appears to have been a rather model Keeper of the Grain Elevators. Yet, the latter's reaction to the poor yield of the 1953 harvest is described as a decision "furtively to decimate" state grain reserves (p. 75). "Decimation" is a strong word to use when the relative magnitudes of the harvest and the reserves are not known; actually, the size of grain reserves is believed to have reached unprecedented levels as a result of the 1952 crop. The reviewer suspects that there must have been a good deal of inaudible stir in the hall among those privy to state secrets whenever Khrushchev publicly castigated Malenkov on such grounds.

THE AUTHOR'S treatment of various other aspects of the 1953 situation is equally subject to question. During the early spring of 1953, he states, Malenkov "remained a staunch devotee of (Stalinist) conventionalism" (p. 63), and it was only the removal of Beria in July which provided "the Khrushchev group with an opportunity to point up the immediacy of the food problem" (p. 66). Subsequently, so we are told, the Malenkovites managed to obscure the grain shortage during the summer, failing *inter alia* to raise grain procurement prices (see p. 67, especially footnote 16, which erroneously alleges that delivery and purchase prices of grain were equal through 1953). Actually, grain purchase prices were increased by a factor of about 9 on June 19, 1953, by a decree of the Council of Ministers of the USSR.[3] So far as is known, this was the very first change in the level of any farm prices undertaken after the death of Stalin. It brought the purchase price of grain to a level of 120 rubles/quintal as opposed to the delivery price of 8.4 rubles/quintal,[4] and was responsible for a rise of 136 percent in the average farm price of grain during 1953.[5] But more was involved here than a mere change in one set of prices. Grain purchases had been suspended in the postwar period, and the same decree probably dealt with various other matters related to their reintroduction.

While this decree was issued in the immediate aftermath of the June riots in Berlin, it seems very unlikely that the Kremlin would have succumbed to panic over the riots in just this particular fashion. It would rather appear that not only "the immediacy of the food problem" but also the more fundamental issues pertaining to grain were raised, discussed and decided upon at a date *preceding* the fall of Beria. One can argue about the correctness of the prescription adopted in the decree (which tended to favor the more prosperous farms), but this very fact suggests that it was not agreed upon without lengthy debate. In any event, the author's analysis of the situation is misleading.

FINALLY, THE STUDY is marred by some misstatements of economic fact. The percentages given in note 73, p. 95, as referring to the "military's share in gross investment" turn out instead to represent the reported share of defense in total budget expenditures. On p. 98, the decrease in planned state investment in light industry for 1955 is said to have been "23 percent (from 1.4 to 1.2 billion rubles)" (sic!). Contrary to the author's claim, no new measures of taxation on household plots were introduced early in 1953 (p. 57). Then there are passages where the author is simply vague: *e.g.*, he states that "concessions to grain farmers" made at the June 1954 meeting of the Central Committee represented a reversal for Khrushchev, but he does not make clear why (p. 93).

Notwithstanding the criticisms offered here, Mr. Ploss' study remains on balance an impressive and provocative analysis of top-level decision-making in a crucial decade of Soviet history. Although the full story of agricultural policy during this period remains to be written, the study should be read by all students of Soviet agriculture as well as by Kremlinologists interested in the mechanics of power in the USSR.

[1] Vsesoiuznyi Nauchno-Issledovatelskii Institut Ekonomiki Selskovo Khoziaistva, *Povyshenie urovnia razvitiia kolkhoznovo proizvodstva*, Moscow, 1961, p. 155.

[2] Nancy Nimitz, *Soviet Government Grain Procurements, Dispositions and Stocks, 1940, 1945-63*, Santa Monica, Calif., RAND Corporation RM 4127-PR, November 1964.

[3] Jerzy F. Karcz and V. P. Timoshenko, "Soviet Agricultural Policy, 1953-62," *Food Research Institute Studies*, No. 2, 1964, p. 135. The full text of this decree is not known, but other Soviet references point also to an increase in grain purchase prices in 1953 (*e.g.*, Khrushchev as cited in note 4 below).

[4] N. S. Khrushchev, *Stroitelstvo kommunizma i razvitie selskovo khoziaistva v SSSR*, Moscow, Vol. 1, 1962, p. 99; and I. S. Malyshev, *Obshchestvennyi uchet truda i tsena pri sotsializme*, Moscow, 1960, p. 355.

[5] Tsentralnoe Statisticheskoe Upravlenie pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR, *Selskoe khoziaistvo* (Moscow), 1960, p. 117.

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The Coup and After: II

EDITORS' NOTE: The January-February 1965 issue of this journal carried four articles dealing with the implications, both past and future, of the ouster of Nikita Sergeievich Khrushchev. To round out the discussion, we invited Mr. Carl Linden, whom our readers will remember for his consistently persuasive articles in defense of the "conflict theory," to contribute his views on the meaning of the October coup. *Without directly challenging Mr. Linden's thesis that "the question of the former First Secretary's powers arose as a consequence of his relentless pursuit of certain basic policy goals," our next two contributors emphasize, instead, the continuity between Khrushchev and his successors. Mr. Ulam calls attention to the unaltering "essence of totalitarian rule," while Mr. Smolinski argues that in major sectors of economic policy the new rulers not only are not repudiating "Khrushchevism," but, indeed, are developing it still further. The last two items are communications from former contributors to this journal: Mr. Rigby emphasizes Khrushchev's dictatorial tendencies as a clue to his ouster, whereas Mr. Cleary sees the latter as having been caused, at least in part, by the dissatisfaction of numerous party functionaries with the 1962 reorganization of the party. Due to lack of time, none of the participants in our original symposium were given an opportunity to reply to the various points raised by the present writers. They will do so in the July-August issue.*

No Room for Radicalism

By Carl Linden

WITH THE DUST barely settled after the shock of Khrushchev's fall, Professor Lowenthal has leapt into the breach with a thought-provoking interpretation of that event. In his article in the January-February issue of this journal, he sees the issue of Khrushchev's "institutional" powers *vis-à-vis* those of his associates as the "basic cause" of the Soviet leader's downfall. Conceding that he overrated Khrushchev's power position in the past, he now develops a picture of a Khrushchev struggling and ultimately failing to break through the institutional barriers limiting his power, barriers successfully defended by the party oligarchy. This viewpoint seems unexceptionable as far as it goes, and it generally accords with arguments offered here by the present writer in 1963.[1] Nevertheless, Professor Lowenthal's analysis adds up to something less than an explanation of "the basic cause" of Khrushchev's fall. Rather, it would be more accurate to say that the question of the former First Secretary's powers arose as a consequence of his relentless pursuit of certain basic *policy* goals.

Regular readers will remember Mr. Linden from his discussion of Khrushchev's strength, "Khrushchev and the Party Battle" (Problems of Communism, *Sept.-Oct. and Nov.-Dec. 1963*). *Mr. Linden is an American student of Soviet affairs.*

[1] *Problems of Communism*, Sept.-Oct. 1963.

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This writer argued in the article mentioned above that, in addition to a conflict over Khrushchev's power, there was a conflict in the leading group over his policy—a conflict describable in terms of a conservative-reformist cleavage—and that, moreover, this cleavage was a crucial aspect of the leadership battle during Khrushchev's incumbency. It is here that Professor Lowenthal and I diverge. While Professor Lowenthal concurs in the view that Khrushchev faced a "conservative" challenge led by Kozlov (I would also add Suslov) in late 1962 and early 1963, he says that Khrushchev's overthrow in October 1964 had little to do with his policy, or with a "conservative" opposition to his "reforming" policies. He bases this conclusion on the view that Khrushchev's "designated" successors remain at the helm and that they remain loyal to his policies.

YET, IF ONE EXAMINES what the new regime has said and done so far and what had been the sources of conflict in the leadership during the former First Secretary's last two years in office, one is driven to the opposite conclusion—namely, that the explanation of last October's upheaval must include a consideration of the policy issues that agitated the later stages of Khrushchev's incumbency. That his successors are neither pristine Stalinists nor "internal" Chinese does not negate—as Professor Lowenthal suggests—the proposition that the repeated and energetic attempts of Khrushchev to reorient the party's political direction provoked a basically conservative resistance. Recognition of this is essential to an understanding of Khrushchev's fall.

First, let us go beyond the new regime's public assertions of loyalty to past policy. A sharp reaction against Khrushchev's reform projects has colored the statements of the new leaders from the outset. They not only have criticized the fallen First Secretary's style of leadership but have condemned him for going too far too fast. Attacks on his "subjectivism," "hare-brained schemes," "immature conclusions" and "reformism," while a criticism of his methods, also add up to the charge that he pursued an overly radical policy. The recent refrain has been that policy must not go beyond what "objective" conditions permit—a favorite saw of the defender of the *status quo*.

The consensus of the present leadership found striking expression in the immediate dismantling of Khrushchev's 1962 party reform—an action vindicating the traditionalist, and incidentally Kozlovian, view that the party's primary role must be political and ideological. The criticism audible in the party at the time the reform was introduced—namely, that it tended to depoliticize and deideologize the party by reducing it to a mere instrument of economic management—re-emerged almost instantly upon Khrushchev's removal. *Pravda* struck then at the Khrushchevian view of the party's role by asserting that the practical problems of Communist construction "cannot be divorced" from the party's political-ideological work and that Lenin's stricture against "dismissing theoretical questions" in party practice now had "special force."[2] The repeal of the reform cannot thus be counted among the symptoms of ideological erosion in the USSR which Professor Lowenthal discerns; rather, it represents a striking measure of the resistance to change in the party apparatus.

IN ORDER TO PUT Khrushchev's party reform in perspective, it is necessary to recognize that it was intimately connected with his long-term battle to shift the focus of party policy to agriculture and the consumer, and away from steel and defense. He had met repeated frustration in this effort; the 22nd CPSU Congress, for example, had registered a conservative consensus on economic policy that was clearly not to his liking. It is against this background that Khrushchev attempted to reshape the party apparatus into a more responsive instrument of his purposes and at the same time to undercut and replace those who had raised obstacles to his aims. His effort to base the party structure on the "production" principle, however, was not a "hare-brained scheme," but flowed logically from his view of the party's role which he had tirelessly propounded since the 20th CPSU Congress. He had then stated that "problems of practical economics" must hold the center of party work both in theory and in practice. The new Lenin document which was subsequently unearthed to buttress the 1962 reform similarly asserted that the "economic organizer," not the "political agitator," must take the lead in the party.

Thus the 1962 reform was not the product of a belated decision on Khrushchev's part that in modern Russia the role of the party must be revised—a decision based, as Professor Lowenthal suggests, on the final collapse in the Carribean of all hopes for a Soviet-led revolutionary breakthrough in world politics. Rather, the reform was intended to *coincide* with the hoped-for breakthrough. Khrushchev, after all, had unveiled the reform plan in the CPSU Presidium a month and a half *before* his Cuban gamble foundered.[3] When the defeat came in Cuba, not only did it deny him the massive political momentum which a victory would have given his

[2] *Pravda*, Oct. 17 and Nov. 5, 1964.

[3] See Khrushchev's memo of September 10, 1962, to the CPSU Presidium, in his *Stroitelstvo kommunizma v SSSR i razvitie selskovo khoziaistva* (The Construction of Communism in the USSR and the Development of Agriculture), Moscow, 1963, Vol. VII, pp. 163-77.

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domestic policy, but he was forced into retreat, facing within the party a dangerous challenge from which he never fully recovered. His leadership suffered a blow at the very time the proposed reform was producing a profound reaction among the party's ideologues and *apparatchiki*.

That all was not well even after Khrushchev regained his footing in the wake of Kozlov's incapacitation was apparent in signs of continuing resistance to his policy initiatives right up to the time of his fall. His sweeping scheme for priority development of the chemical and fertilizer industries provoked opposition that led to a scaling-down of his fertilizer goal. His "wheat deal" provoked objections from associates who favored belt-tightening rather than importing "capitalist" grain to cushion the effects of the 1963 harvest disaster. His effort to get funds for his chemicals program at the expense of defense aroused military protests. Indeed, the complaints reached such a pitch that in early 1964 Khrushchev felt compelled to defend the very premises of his course and insist that the "comrades" understand that his chemicals drive was not a "craze" or "fad" but fundamental policy.[4] His proposal at the end of September 1964 to revolutionize planning to favor the consumer turned out to be the straw that helped break the camel's back.

To the last a gambler who subscribed to the precept that a good offense is the best defense, Khrushchev in his last year rapidly unfolded a refurbished strategy of détente abroad and reform at home. The test-ban agreement, the chemicals program, and his new consumer project were part and parcel of a new assault on the *status quo* in policy. Concurrently, he sought to force a decisive break with his Chinese enemies and revived the issue of his defeated "anti-party" opponents at home. Thus, in April 1964, Soviet plans for a world Communist meeting were announced, and it was disclosed that "Molotov and others" had been expelled from the party. Both actions must be counted among Khrushchev's Pyrrhic victories: the first foundered in the face of foreign party opposition, and the second only strengthened the resolve of various members of the leading group to prevent Khrushchev from acquiring purge powers over them.

ONE THING should be obvious. Khrushchev's zeal for reform and the risks he undertook in this connection offended too many vested interests within the regime too often. The new group, characteristically, has displayed a wariness of reform schemes that might upset the existing political and institutional balance within the regime. For policy execution, new reliance is being placed on the managerial and administrative bureaucracy of the state, which under Khrushchev's long-term policy was to play an ever-diminishing role. Consistent with this trend is the regime's emphasis on "scientific" management, efficiency, improved quality of production, and the use of economic "levers" to induce better economic performance.

Also not to be ignored is the effort of Khrushchev's successors to get off the collision course with the Chinese. This seemingly vain endeavor follows up past criticism of the former First Secretary for pressing a personal vendetta against the Chinese—criticism to which Khrushchev himself appeared to refer in April 1964 when he quipped that one day he might be censured for "subjectivism" on account of his sharp personal attacks on Mao.[5] Peking, nevertheless, continues to scorn

MORE OF THE SAME?

After the fall of Khrushchev, which was a public proclamation of the bankruptcy of modern revisionism, we have hoped that the new CPSU leadership would honestly and openly admit its mistakes and renounce the revisionists' line and policies pursued when Khrushchev was in power, and we advised them to do so. However, contrary to the aspirations of the Soviet people and the revolutionary peoples of the world, the new CPSU leadership has taken over Khrushchev revisionism as a priceless heritage and has continued to brandish it. During the celebrations this year of the 95th anniversary of Lenin's birth, they still had the effrontery to brag that "the general line drafted at the 20th and 22nd Congresses of our party and embodied in the program of the CPSU" was a "vivid indication" of a "creative approach" to theory. It was precisely in the name of a so-called "creative approach" to Leninism that Khrushchev actually renounced every fundamental thesis of Leninism, became the greatest revisionist in all history, and finally ended up in total bankruptcy. Can his successors come to any better end?

—From "The Great Victory of Leninism," *Hung Ch'i* (Peking), April 1965.

[4] Speech to the February 1964 Plenum, *Pravda*, Feb. 15, 1964.

[5] Speech at Moscow rally, Radio Moscow, Apr. 15, 1964.

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all offers of accommodation short of Moscow's full surrender to the Chinese political line, and Khrushchev may yet have the last laugh on this issue.

Furthermore, the new regime has shown a strong inclination toward the view that world revolution, rather than Khrushchev's "communism-in-one-country" policy, must hold first place in Communist strategy. The themes of anti-imperialism and national liberation have been upgraded, and the Khrushchevian emphasis on coexistence, economic competition, and détente has dropped several notches. It is worth recalling in this connection that a similar shift in emphasis emerged temporarily when Khrushchev was in retreat after Cuba. A CPSU letter of February 1963 to the Chinese party, proposing an agenda for Sino-Soviet talks, favored the CCP position by listing the subjects of anti-imperialism and national liberation ahead of coexistence; a later letter, however, reversed the agenda items, putting coexistence and economic competition first.[6]

TO SUM UP, Khrushchev insisted on imposing upon the party policies that flew in the face of traditional practice. Moreover, to attain his goals, he persistently sought to use and to expand his power, and in the fall of 1964 this brought to a head the "institutional" question of his power relationship to his associates in the Presidium. By attempting to overstep the bounds of a generally more conservative consensus in the leading group, he finally alienated even his former supporters.[7]

None of the foregoing conflicts with the obvious fact that the present caretakers of power in the USSR represent an unstable and diverse coalition of leaders. The reformist forces which Khrushchev sought to lead did not disappear with his fall any more than did the more conservative forces Kozlov once sought to marshal against him. Any new contender for power will have to operate in this context, seeking to forge a program that could win support from both ends of the political spectrum. The conflicting pressures for continuity and change are already clearly visible in the new regime and mark the renewed and far from resolved battle over the regime's policy direction. Just as post-Stalin party politics revolved around Stalin's political and doctrinal legacy, so after Khrushchev the controversy revolves around the latter's revisions of that legacy.

The new regime's task of assuring party hegemony in the Soviet system is now complicated by the fact that it is precisely during periods of divided leadership, such as the present one, that the party's ability to contain the social forces striving to free themselves from political tutelage is least effective. As various party figures search for sources of political support, the professional, managerial and intellectual elites gain opportunities to press for reform and extended freedom of action—not, however, within the party framework as Khrushchev envisaged, but outside it.

Khrushchev carried the CPSU through its perilous post-Stalin transition, but his concept of the party's long-range role has clearly foundered. He tried to purge the party of Stalinist practices, yet himself remained their prisoner in some respects. While he helped make a return to full-blown Stalinism improbable, he failed to overthrow the forces of orthodoxy and conservatism embedded in the regime. The underlying instability of Soviet leadership politics which infected the atmosphere during his own incumbency persists, and it beclouds the future of his successors. He leaves an ambiguous legacy.

[6] See CPSU letters to the CCP of Feb. 21 and March 30, 1963.

[7] The approach of the new group to the issues cited above is consistent with the summary account of Suslov's indictment of Khrushchev's policy that appeared in the Communist-controlled Italian paper *Paese Sera*, Oct. 30, 1964.

Another Crisis?

By Adam Ulam

NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV'S downfall provides one more illustration of how dangerous and unrewarding it is for a politician to try to please everybody. What in the mouth of his predecessor had been a macabre joke became a reality under Khrushchev: for the average Russian, "life has become better, life has become gayer." Yet no expression of official or popular regret followed the unceremonious dismissal of the elderly First Secretary. He did not want *us* to become Communists, only our grandchildren. Yet cold analysis rather than kind words came from the non-Communist world following Nikita Sergeievich's political burial. We were re-

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minded that foreign Communists, who formerly had grovelled before Stalin's sadistic splendor, had long ago begun to grumble openly under his successor; that the international left-wing intelligentsia, once awed by the omnipotent monster, soon decided that it could not respect a boor who preferred Sholokhov to Pasternak, and who argued with his unruly intellectuals and artists rather than leaving the task to the KGB. Even family virtues seemed to play a role in Khrushchev's fall: Stalin, we were told, had had his brother-in-law shot; Khrushchev's very natural solicitude about his son-in-law's career, however, was anathema to his colleagues. And thus, after a call to outer space, exits Nikita Sergeievich. . . .

Those ironic aspects are important because they were inherent not only in the fate of the man, but in that of his whole generation. Khrushchev was not one of the makers of the Revolution, nor is he simply, as are Brezhnev and Kosygin, the product of Stalin's bureaucratic machine. He joined the party as a grown man in 1918, the "time of chaos and enthusiasm" as Lenin called it, and he has never outgrown certain characteristics of that period. The old Bolsheviks, of whom the last survivors in the hierarchy are Shvernik and the indestructible Mikoyan, could grow cynical or disillusioned; the Stalinists attempted to operate behind closed doors; but Khrushchev never entirely lost faith in the power of oratory and dramatic improvisation. The enemy could always be outshouted, bullied or cajoled.

Thus, to the undoubted shock of the *apparatchiki*, Khrushchev chose to make both the sins of Stalinism and the deepening split in world communism the subject of impassioned oratory, rather than to deal with both discretely and *sotto voce*. Whenever he pleaded for coexistence, he must have appeared to the Chinese to be proposing a division of the world between Russia and the United States; and when he chose to assume his other role—that of a militant Communist—he could not do so without seeming to threaten the West with a nuclear holocaust. It does not take a Kremlinologist to understand and sympathize with the befuddlement which must have been felt by Soviet administrators when the party machinery was suddenly ordered split into agricultural and industrial components. And what further improvisations and "hare-brained schemes" were in Khrushchev's fertile mind when his colleagues decided that they could not put up with him any more?

MESSRS. Fainsod, Lowenthal and Conquest offer excellent commentaries on the shift, but they seem to shy away from what might be called a generational analysis. Mr. Fainsod comes closest to it when he records Khrushchev's smug self-satisfaction with his own career. The world in which a peasant boy from Kalinovka could reach the pinnacle of power had to be the best of all possible worlds. For a man of Khrushchev's generation and temperament, there could be no "inherent contradictions" in communism, no insoluble problems. Another man—certainly Stalin—would have read the Chinese out of the international Communist movement long ago, or would have continued arguing with them *sub rosa*. Khrushchev, as we now know, kept shifting between efforts at appeasement and vociferous denunciations of dogmatism and sectarianism. When we, the Western experts, say that the Soviet national interest is no longer compatible with that of world communism, we forget how unthinkable this conclusion must have been for somebody who has lived in the Communist faith for forty-six years, a faith which had brought him the highest honors his society could bestow and had enabled him to keep the vestiges of self-respect during the most degrading years of Stalinist rule.

The last point has some bearing on Mr. Lowenthal's observation about the erosion of ideology in the USSR. Alas! This analysis had been made, and quite correctly, ever since 1921-22, when the Mensheviks chuckled over the introduction of the NEP. This writer has been among the many who have speculated about the *embourgeoisement* of Soviet society and its effect on Soviet policies. But can one always assume that changes in the mentality of the worshippers are automatically reflected in that of the priests? Isn't it also, to harp on this theme, a problem of generations?

Mr. Conquest makes a bold attempt to estimate the extent of Khrushchev's power during his ten-year tenure. Here, as in everything concerning the power-personal relationships within the Soviet hierarchy, we are in a veritable labyrinth where a handful of facts beckons the unwary to become lost amidst a profusion of suppositions and questionable historical analogies. It is only *now* that we are getting some reliable data concerning *Lenin's* last days as a politician. We are not apt to learn the full "inside" story of Khrushchev's rule and downfall for many years to come. Instead, we shall probably be fed scraps of information interspersed with fibs. It is unlikely that the latter will be as entertaining as some related by Khrushchev himself. (Stalin studying the war front on a globe; Malenkov's hand shaking when he was to ring for the marshals to arrest Beria. Really!) Nobody who studies Kosygin's rather bilious countenance, or Brezhnev's rather boy-scout behavior (tears at the reception for the cosmonauts) will readily credit them with a sense of humor. But then, the Soviets always surprise us.

IN A MORE serious vein, however, what about the inevitable "implications"? Here, I don't think one can go beyond Mr. Conquest's very commendable warning: "The lesson of the recent events is that

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in dealing with Soviet politics we must never think that a restricted view of the possibilities is prudent or commonsensical." Khrushchev's successors are very likely to find out that for all their greater discretion and sobriety, and their renunciation of "hare-brained schemes," the problems besetting communism at home and abroad are as intractable as ever before. The most serious one, that of China, is grounded not only in the facts of geopolitics but also in the now very intransigent position of the Chinese Communists. One is reminded of Lenin's attitude towards the Mensheviks. Whatever their concessions, whatever their sacrifices at the altar of "working-class unity," they were invariably branded as "revisionists," "liquidationists," "capitulationists," and so on. Shamed out of their moderation, the poor Mensheviks were always being driven leftwards, and yet their militancy was always judged to be belated and insufficient. Nobody would mistake the present members of the Presidium for the Dans and Martovs, and yet those astute and unsentimental people are strangely on the defensive when attacked for their lack of zeal in propagating communism.[1]

When Mr. Conquest writes that through Khrushchev's downfall ". . . the Soviet system has . . . entered a general crisis from which it can emerge transformed out of all recognition," one feels a bit puzzled. Crisis has been the normal condition of Soviet politics. Almost any, say, three-year period of Soviet history has embraced at least one fundamental crisis. 1921—Lenin's death; the mid-1920's—Stalin's consolidation of power; the early 1930's—the post-collectivization famine; the middle 1930's—the decimation of the Bolshevik leadership and military elite. Since Stalin, we've had the turbulent 1956-57 period, with its crisis both in Moscow and the entire Soviet bloc; the still unexplained but portentous maneuvers which occurred at the time of the 22nd Congress in 1961—and so on and on. All those dates and events epitomized very fundamental changes, and yet not one of them led the system to be "transformed out of all recognition." The essence of totalitarian rule and the commitment to militant, expansive communism still remained.

Is Khrushchev's fall ushering in a period when those two bedrock characteristics of the Soviet state are going to wither away? I must confess I see little foundation for such a prognosis. All of us who are in the business of following Soviet affairs are, both for scholarly and for very human reasons, drawn to postulate a basic evolution of the system. But looking at the present with Brezhnev and Kosygin, or even into the near future with Shelepin and Polianski or their like, it is still difficult to collect enough facts for such a hypothesis. One might paraphrase a well-known social scientist of the past and complain that the experts have only *interpreted* the Soviet reality in various ways, while the point is to *change* it. But it takes a very, very great man, as well as the proverbial forces of history, to do the latter, and I don't see such a man among the current rulers of the Soviet state.

[1] Anybody who doubts this might well consult collections of relevant documents, such as found in William E. Griffith's *The Sino-Soviet Rift*, Boston, MIT Press, 1964.

Khrushchevism without Khrushchev

By Leon Smolinski

HOW MUCH CONTINUITY and how much change is there going to be under Khrushchev's successors? In his stimulating essay, Professor Lowenthal expresses a cautious hope that the present Soviet regime of Thermidorian bureaucrats "may prove more calculable and more nearly legal, as well as less inspired and inspiring, than that of their predecessors, and that it may thus at last give a chance for the quiet maturing of new minds and forces that will one day break out of the shell of a dead tradition."

While sharing this hope, I would like to suggest that in at least one key area—that of economics—this process had actually progressed quite far during the Khrushchev era itself. The profound and seemingly irreversible change in the climate of economic opinion owed less to Khrushchev's active inspiration than to the "Thermidorian" laissez-faire attitudes adopted by his regime. In striking contrast to Stalin's times, economists were permitted to appraise and criticize at first the means and then, increasingly, even the ends of economic policy, and to suggest reforms. Conflicting views were allowed to appear in print, and the newfound freedom of discussion favored, on balance, economic heretics

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and reform-mongers. True, the reform proposals were implemented selectively, slowly, and on an experimental basis. But this in itself can be taken as evidence of rationality. An all-out campaign to computerize or "Libermanize" the planned Soviet economy overnight would only have discredited the reformers' cause.

Professor Fainsod's timely reminder that "it would be less than fair to rest an appraisal of the Khrushchev era on the latter-day criticisms voiced by his successors" is particularly applicable in this instance. By focusing attention on his "harebrained schemes, half-baked conclusions, hasty decisions and actions, divorced from reality," [1] to the exclusion of the positive aspects of his approach to economic problems, we would exaggerate the differences between the "erratic" Nikita Sergeievich and his "rational" successors and would ignore the important elements of continuity, of "Khrushchevism without Khrushchev," which will not only survive but mature and bear fruit under the new regime.

Khrushchev's acquiescence in the renaissance of Soviet economics originated in his dissatisfaction with the long-standing neglect of economic calculation in Soviet planning, management and decision-making. "In our country people often do not even calculate how much a construction project will cost. . . . And how would a capitalist act in such a case? He would adopt the most economical and most rational solution, he must have his profit." [2] The American engineer had long been a model to Soviet technocrats; now the penny-pinching, profit-making, market-oriented capitalist entrepreneur—while ideologically still remaining a *bête noire*—was set up by Khrushchev as a model of economic efficiency to be emulated by Soviet executives. Crude and unsophisticated as Khrushchev's pronouncements were, they did much to restore to a place of honor the goals of cost reduction and of profitability. They pointed to the urgent need for economic calculation in a planned economy. Fortunately, the dictator did not try to formulate theoretical principles of optimal resource allocation himself: in a way, his greatest contribution to economic science was his *avoidance* of making a contribution. Instead, he gave the green light to the professionals, in particular the mathematical economists, who did try to do the job.

Of these, few had been left after the bloodletting of the 1930's and the ensuing decades of intellectual doldrums when, in the words of a Soviet scholar, "our only economist was Stalin, and he was not an economist." Deprived of access to statistical data, the surviving Soviet economists were, to use Oskar Lange's simile, in the position of an astronomer whose telescope has been confiscated.

AFTER ALL THIS, the Khrushchev era brought striking progress. Within less than a decade, Soviet economic analysis made a quantum jump from the 1860's into the 1960's, from an apologetic pseudo-institutionalism to sophisticated mathematical models of resource allocation, from abacus to high-speed electronic computers. This impressive intellectual achievement was spearheaded by a group of mathematical economists such as L. V. Kantorovich, A. A. Konius, V. S. Nemchinov and V. V. Novozhilov. They deserve most of the credit for it, but they could not have gotten anywhere in this highly sensitive area, full of ideological pitfalls and powerful vested interests, had it not been for the permissive, laissez-faire attitude of the regime.

The same holds true to an even greater extent of the numerous proposals for institutional reform, for new incentive schemes, and for a far-reaching decentralization of decision-making down to the enterprise level, emanating from business economists such as A. Birman, E. Liberman and others. Professor Lowenthal credits Khrushchev's successors with having recognized that the real need of the Soviet economy was for greater managerial freedom from bureaucratic interference. What they have mainly done thus far is to approve and, at times, expand the experiments in this direction that were designed and initiated under Khrushchev. For example, the experiment with "direct links" between producers and sellers, under which output, assortment, and prices of clothing apparel are determined by negotiation between the factory and the trade agency, was launched in July 1964. Since May 1964, eighty factories have been experimenting with one of Liberman's incentive schemes designed to encourage the managers to utilize fully their plant capacity.[3] The so-called "Soviet firms," the first major organizational innovation on the enterprise level in three decades, have been going on since October 1961. These new large enterprises, created by merging from four to 35 factories, should result in more viable, competently managed decision-making units and should thus ultimately facilitate decentralization. Similarly, the necessary prerequisite for any decentralization policies, the reform of wholesale prices, now scheduled to be enacted on January 1, 1966, has been in preparation for years.

The award of the Lenin prize to the three leading pioneers of Soviet mathematical economics in April 1965, the approval and expansion of experiments

[1] *Pravda*, Oct. 17, 1964, p. 1.
[2] N. S. Khrushchev, *Stroitelstvo kommunizma v SSSR i razvitie selskovo khoziaistva*, Moscow, 1964, Vol. VII, p. 142.
[3] *Ekonomicheskaia gazeta*, (Moscow), Mar. 31, 1965, pp. 9-10.

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carried on under Khrushchev, the even more resolute and considerably more sophisticated search for a new economic rationality in decision-making—all these indicate that the positive aspects of economic Khrushchevism not only have survived the *coup* but are being strengthened. Clearly the basic needs of the Soviet economy have not changed overnight; but, more important, these needs are receiving ample recognition by the new Soviet leaders. Such recognition has not always been forthcoming. For instance, in 1947, the Soviet economy needed grain imports more urgently than it now needs decentralization and economic calculation; yet, "grain was being exported, while in some areas people were swelling and even dying of hunger." [4] The important thing, then, is not so much that the needs exist as that they are given proper concern by the leadership.

The considerable physical continuity of the two regimes may also play a part in assuring a certain continuity in outlook. After all, the present leaders, including Messrs. Brezhnev and Kosygin themselves, were members of the Khrushchev team. There is even the intriguing possibility that it may have been Kosygin's influence, rather than Khrushchev's own insight, which prompted the latter's remarkable tolerance toward economic rebels—a tolerance that contrasted so sharply with his periodic crackdowns on writers, sculptors and non-representational painters. If so, perhaps the title of this note should be changed to "Kosyginism with Kosygin."

So much for the assets taken over by Khrushchev's successors. But what about his blunders, hasty decisions and harebrained schemes? Since the present leaders have specifically repudiated some of them and will try to avoid others, will this not be a major source of divergences between the two regimes? The differences, however, appear likely to be of degree rather than of kind. The leaders' *raison d'être* is to serve as decision-makers of the last resort. By their very nature these decisions are occasionally bound to be hasty, half-baked, and based on intuition rather than on mathematical models. Furthermore, and perhaps more important, the Soviet system traditionally tends, in implementing the top leaders' policies, to over-react and to overshoot the target. As a result, policies which may be desirable *per se* are sometimes carried over into areas for which they are not suited and in which their cost exceeds their benefits. Corn planted in sub-polar regions is an extreme example of a basically rational initiative ending in wasteful excesses.

Thus, if the search for economic rationality provides one common denominator between the Khrushchev and Brezhnev-Kosygin regimes, lapses into harebrained schemes may possibly prove to be another. But since there are an infinite number of ways of being irrational, it is a 71-billion ruble question what harebrained schemes may eventually crop up in the wake of the current drive to rationalize the Soviet economy.

[4] N. S. Khrushchev, *op. cit.*, Vol. VIII, p. 265.

Communications

Another Cult, Another Coup

AS USUAL, I find myself in broad agreement with Mr. Lowenthal. I think he is unduly modest, however, in suggesting that the successful *coup* against Khrushchev disproves his former view that "while Khrushchev might have to yield to adverse majorities within the party Presidium on specific issues, his position was strong enough to prevent the formation of any faction that was systematically opposed to his leadership or general policy, and to remove the instigators of any attempt in that direction." As Mr. Lowenthal points out, the overthrow of Khrushchev was clearly *not* the work of a conservative opposition formerly led by Kozlov, the only faction systematically opposed to Khrushchev and his policies whose existence has been argued with any degree of plausibility; so the October *coup* can scarcely be taken as confirming the hypothesis of such an opposition.

Personally, I still cannot credit any member of Khrushchev's entourage with imagining he could prosper by fostering a *faction* openly and *systematically* to oppose the Premier/First Secretary. While various groupings based on policy orientations, patronage links, jurisdiction, *etc.* undoubtedly competed to influence developments, no one line of conflict can be regarded as the *key* to Soviet politics in the late Khrushchev era. In September 1963 I headed a list of twelve main "focuses of internal conflict within the Soviet system" with the following: "between the principal leader (at present Khrushchev) and secondary leaders who have a common interest in setting limits to the former's power" (*Problems of Communism*, September-October 1963, p. 36), and I would agree with Mr. Lowenthal that it is in terms of this "focus of conflict," rather than, say, a polarization of the leadership into liberal Khrushchevites and conservative anti-Khrushchevites, that the events of last October are mainly to be explained. Taking this view, we see these events not as the decisive battle in a long factional campaign, but as a swiftly crystallizing, conspiratorial revolt precipitated by one or more of the leaders who correctly estimated the

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extent of the hostility which had been accumulating within the leadership towards Khrushchev's dominance.

This view derives some support from the terms in which the leadership has sought to justify their removal of Khrushchev. An editorial in the first number of the Central Committee's journal *Party Life* to appear after the *coup* speaks of the need to curb any leader who "gets puffed up with his importance and stops taking account of the opinions of his comrades," who fails to ensure "creative, and not (merely) formal discussion of problems at plenums, meetings, and executive sessions (*zasedaniia*)." "One cannot allow even the most authoritative person to escape the control of the leading collective (of which he is a member), and of the party organization, and to get the idea that he knows everything and can do everything, that the knowledge and experience of his comrades is absolutely of no value to him." (*Party Life*, No. 20, October 1964, p. 7). This squares with Mr. Lowenthal's estimate that the *coup* was provoked by Khrushchev's increasing tendency to act without proper consultation, at times confronting the Presidium with a *fait accompli*.

Mr. Lowenthal is also undoubtedly correct in referring to the powerful social, ideological and political pressures against the resurgence of personal dictatorship in the USSR. But against this we must set the massive evidence that political executives everywhere experience the greatest difficulty in functioning effectively without an acknowledged leader who is "more equal" than the rest. (Recalling Mr. Lowenthal's analogy, only five years separated the establishment of the *Directoire* from Napoleon's emergence as Consul). This need not lead to dictatorship if there is a guarantee of effective appeal from the executive to broader institutions whose members are themselves not simply puppets of the leader. The present Soviet leaders no doubt sincerely wish to prevent a new Khrushchev from emerging and eventually "escaping from the control of the collective." But how can they ensure themselves against this, unless they are prepared to *institutionalize* the accountability which they claim they have both to the party and to the Soviet people? Paradoxically, they can only guarantee their collective power by limiting it.

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The Institutional Framework

WRITING AS THEY DID almost on the heels of the event, your contributors on the *coup* in Moscow can scarcely be censured for eschewing its institutional mechanics and directing their inquiries instead to the "underlying changes in the social and political dynamics of the system as a whole." This is a necessary—and, in the long term, doubtless more profitable—exercise than a narrowly Kremlinological exposition of the October days. Yet, if Khrushchev's successors have failed to demonstrate that there was "any major difference over foreign or domestic policy," if they do not thus far appear to be acting as the instruments of the forces of change, if in fact the regime manifests a temporary loss of direction, then surely the *coup* should be treated primarily as a coup and not as a socio-political extension of all that has happened since Stalin. Whatever its ultimate causes and consequences, it was, after all, staged by nine (minus x) members of the party Presidium and however many Central Committee members were able to scurry to Moscow in time for the crucial plenum.

That majorities adverse to Khrushchev did form from time to time within the Presidium has been too well enough documented in your pages to require any elaboration. The Gordian knot that has to be cut before analysis can safely become general is the fact that the majority which formed in late 1964 felt confident enough to put its case to the Central Committee (thus repeating Khrushchev's maneuver of 1957), and that the Central Committee this time turned on the leader.

Of the host of explanations that may be advanced, the following has the merit of pointing up the possible motivation of the largest bloc of CC members. The 1962 reorganization created two first secretaries in most *oblasts*, a circumstance that undoubtedly galled the original single incumbents like Khrushchev's proverbial "bone in the throat." Whereas the first-secretaryship of an important *oblast* had previously carried with it ex-officio membership in the CC, there were now two contendors for selection. With a new CC due to be formed later this year, what better issue could disaffected members of the Presidium have chosen to win the support of the outgoing committee? That they did offer a *quid pro quo* is evidenced by their first decisive organizational move after the *coup*—namely, the reversal of the split of the local party apparatus. *Pravda* has been reticent about the election of first secretaries in the reunified *oblast* organizations, but it is already clear that the 1961 CC members have scored well.

By all means let us ask whether the *coup* will promote cohesion or disintegration, "oligarchic rigidity" or "ideological dynamism," but analysis will be the more fruitful if it is related to the institutional framework within which these forces must operate.

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Pilsen: The Unknown Revolt

By Otto Ulc

If it were not for the voices raised recently by restless writers and unorthodox economists, post-1948 Czechoslovakia would still be living down its reputation as a docile and lackluster satellite of the Soviet Union. Yet it was in the West Bohemian city of Pilsen (Plzen), well known for its mellow beer and deadly implements of war, that for the first time in the history of Communist Eastern Europe workers rose against the ruling regime and temporarily forced public authority out of business. This first post-Stalin rebellion took place on June 1 and 2, 1953, more than two weeks before the uprising in East Germany.

The immediate cause of the revolt in Pilsen was the promulgation of the 1953 Currency Reform Act, which virtually wiped out the people's savings and, understandably, met with considerable hostility all over the country. In Pilsen that resentment was transformed into an action that took everybody concerned by surprise. The Czechoslovak government took care, of course, not to advertise the debacle, and because of its control of all media of communication it has succeeded in keeping the true nature of the events in Pilsen obscured from the world at large.

Though I was born in Pilsen and lived there most of my life, the unique days of June 1953 are not part of my personal experience. I was in Prague at the time, taking my final examinations at the Law School of Charles University. The following July, however, immediately after graduation, I was back in my native city, presenting myself (with assignment orders from the Ministry of Justice in hand) to Judge Miroslav Tlapak, head of the local District Court and my new superior.

I was now an *Auskultant* (Assistant Judge) and on the way to becoming a District Judge myself some day. In order to become acquainted with judicial proceedings, I would sit on the bench with the presiding judge and two lay assessors—as a silent observer in the beginning, but after a month with the right to question witnesses. Shortly thereafter I also began preparing written opinions for the court.

For almost five months after my arrival, participants in the Pilsen revolt—or those accused of participating in it—were paraded before the court. Day after day I witnessed the secret trial proceedings; I took part in the political meetings at the court; and I even had the opportunity to read—thanks to my unauthorized knowledge of the combination to the judge's safe—the secret documents pertaining to the cases under trial. In the end I could reconstruct quite accurately the entire history of the revolt that became officially known as the "Pilsen events" of June 1 and 2, 1953.

Beginning in 1952, the possibility of a future monetary reform had become a persistent topic of conversation in Czechoslovakia. The talk was based

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on rumors built up by occasional hints from "well-informed" sources in Prague and by Western broadcasts. By May 1953, the expectation of "something to come" was intense. Thus, when the Skoda factory management in Pilsen, near the end of May, changed its paycheck policy by increasing advance wages, the workers, suddenly receiving more money than usual, became suspicious and asked for explanations and assurances about the durability of the currency. The local Communist Party spokesman endeavored to calm them down with a statement that ran about as follows: "Our currency is firm. Trust the party, Comrades! The rumors about a reform have no justification and are being spread by the class enemy and Western imperialism in order to harm our building of socialism."

With this guarantee the workers went home, only to be informed by a Prague broadcast the next Saturday afternoon, May 30, that a new law on monetary exchange had been promulgated. On Monday, June 1, the Skoda employees gathered in their plant but refused to work without an adequate explanation of the new measure. The party then sent in badly-briefed agitators with the impossible task of persuading the workers that they had not been cheated by the government. The party propagandists were booed, and large groups of employees began to debate heatedly. In many instances the worker's position was presented by intellectuals who had been demoted to manual labor and who had no great trouble outwitting and ridiculing the agitators. One particularly successful tormentor of the party agitators was a former college teacher named Vrzal, who was subsequently severely punished.

But debating gained nothing, and since nobody was in a mood to resume work, the word spread to walk out and demand a convincing explanation from the Mayor of Pilsen. (It is significant to note that in 1953 the city hall was still considered the center of local political power; today the people would go straight to party headquarters.) Everyone then tried to leave the factory, but only about 3,000 workers succeeded: in many divisions of the plant the entrances were barricaded by the Workers' Militia. Some of the militiamen panicked and shot into the crowd, causing the first casualties.

Still, when the protest march to the city hall started—a distance of about two miles—the rebellious mood of the workers, now joined by some bystanders, did not go beyond individual resentment over lost savings. As they became part of a crowd, however, the workers rediscovered their sense of solidarity, and the initial slogans against the currency reform were soon followed by slogans attacking the regime itself. The most popular seemed to be cries of *Plzen cerna, Benesovi verna* (Black Pilsen is faithful to Benes) and *Bude zase hej, prijdou hosi z USA* (We shall have good times again, the boys from the USA will come back again).

When the demonstrators reached the city hall, they found its heavy gate locked. By that time the multitude between the renaissance structure housing the Mayor's offices and the Gothic dome of St. Bartholomew on Republic Square included thousands of spectators attracted by the commotion. The initiative was then seized by young laborers, many of them in their 'teens. A few managed to sneak into the building through a window, and presently the gate was flung open. The crowd surged forward, and hundreds ran inside, flushed with victory and ready for the spoils. Party posters, propaganda material, busts and pictures were torn from the walls and trampled underfoot. Within a matter of minutes, the rioters found their way to a microphone to address the gathering in the square with bellicose denunciations of the currency fraud, of the government, and of communism, at the same time cheering for Benes (by that time dead five years) and for the American troops who had liberated the city in 1945. The crowd grew especially enthusiastic when the happy youths inside seized upon that traditional Bohemian form of political protest—defenestration. Only this time, instead of pro-Hapsburg Catholics and imperial scribes, busts of Stalin and Gottwald came flying out of the windows.

While this premature liquidation of the cult of personality was going on at the city hall, another seat of state authority came under attack: the court building, pompously called the Palace of Justice, located in Veleslavinova Street No. 44, a mere block away. Interestingly enough, the demonstrators' attention was drawn to the headquarters of the judiciary not so much by resentment against its official occupants as by anger aimed at a single individual named Votruba, a secret policeman by profession. He had been apprehended earlier at the corner of Solni and Dominikanska streets and had been considerably manhandled by the demonstrators, but being fast on his feet, he had managed to escape and find refuge in the court building. After his hasty arrival the gates were locked shut, only to be demolished by a huge log swung by the irate pursuers. Votruba was finally caught inside the building and was dragged out to the nearby river Mze to be drowned. The unexpectedly low water level in the stream, however, threatened to deprive the execution of any dignity, and the enterprise was therefore given up. Votruba's captors let him limp away, and they returned to serious business in the Palace of Justice.

There, the now familiar scene of destruction was reenacted. Besides the busts and portraits, judges' official gowns and typewriters and a number of file cabinets were thrown into the street, doused with gasoline, and burned. As it turned out, the destruction of the files proved to be of little value since only records of the Family and Probate

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Court were involved. Nobody managed to find the files relating to prosecutions of anti-state activities.

Meanwhile, on the third floor, Judges Tlapak and Jaromir Fikerle, who had barricaded themselves in their offices, indulged in some shooting at the demonstrators. The rest of the court personnel, however, took a more pacific approach. A woman judge, Eliska Synkova, posed as a cook in the cafeteria, and the District Prosecutor, Frantisek Herger, contracted cramps and spent several long hours locked in an uncomfortably small ladies' room. The only casualty of the courthouse engagement was a clerical employee named Havel, a party member, who was caught trying to leave the building by the back entrance. Later on, I happened to sit on a committee which turned down his claim to a medal for bravery.

By this time, a huge demonstration was going on in the streets. A jeep ornamented with Czechoslovak and American flags was followed through the city by thousands of protesting marchers. Pictures of former Presidents Masaryk and Benes and all kinds of flags, except the Soviet, appeared in the windows; all visible symbols of the Communist regime, especially party posters, were torn down and burned.

Gradually, the rebellion sank to the level of fist fights. The targets most eagerly looked for were members of the STB (secret police), militiamen, and whoever still happened to wear the party emblem on his coat. The only weapon used by the demonstrators—and that with admirable skill, especially by the young Skoda workers—was brass knuckles. (One of the most prominent knuckle-dusters happened to be the son of the cadre chief of the Skoda works.) Some of these young fighters even volunteered their services to others. To mention an actual case, a fragile old lady approached a worker in the street, asking him, as a favor, to beat up a man standing not far away, who, she claimed, was a mean Communist. The request was promptly complied with.

The fist fights and burning continued into the next day, but there was never any looting. The rebels had no organization and no leadership; from beginning to end, the entire affair was completely spontaneous. Even more striking, however, was the response of the state authorities: they did virtually nothing. An army detachment showed up at the court house at one point, equipped with sub-machine guns and under orders to clear the street. But the crowd remained undeterred, and some individuals even moved close to the soldiers, daring them to "shoot workers' bullets into workers' chests." No violence took place, and the commanding officer—whose subsequent fate remains unknown to me—ordered his unit to leave.

At the same time, party functionaries and members of the secret police disappeared from the streets. The regular uniformed police remained passive and did not intervene. The only group ready to defend the regime was the Workers' Militia, which engaged in some sporadic shooting and also suffered most of the casualties. Among the seventy some persons seriously injured during the course of the revolt, the clear majority were militiamen and secret police. To make the picture complete, it should be added that the fire department—an institution traditionally ridiculed in Czechoslovakia—paid its token of loyalty to the government by trying to disperse the demonstrators with fire hoses. However, somebody cut the hoses before any action could be taken.

In short, utter confusion on both sides characterized the two-day revolt. The rioters and the local authorities were equally surprised that the events that came to pass could happen. If initial success put the demonstrators in a state of euphoria that robbed them of whatever capacity they may have possessed to organize themselves and act purposefully—for example, by taking over the local radio station rather than wasting time and energy burning party posters—the sequence of events likewise paralyzed the local organs of state power. The only practical action undertaken was the dispatch of secret police informers into the streets to mix with the demonstrators, take pictures, and remember as many faces as possible.

Yet even this effort bore some strange fruit, at least in one remarkable instance. After everything was over, the man who in the minds of the citizens of Pilsen emerged as the hero of their revolution was a certain Josef Fencl, a person well known about the city for his anti-Communist sentiments and also remembered as chairman of the long-since dissolved Society of American-Czechoslovak Friendship. As I subsequently learned at the trials, Fencl actually had been recruited by the secret police, probably under duress, to act as a provocateur and informer, and had been sent in that capacity to observe the riot at the city hall. Once on the scene, however, he quickly forgot his distasteful job and became the most active rebel in the engagement. He was sentenced to seven years in jail—an unusually mild verdict under the circumstances—but he actually served considerably less time, for in 1956 I met him in town, free again.

When the rebellion was finally quelled on the second day, it was the accomplishment not of the Pilsen authorities but of units of the Interior Guard (*Vnitrni straz*, a branch of the Ministry of Interior) and a contingent of the Workers' Militia, both sent from Prague. A curfew and martial law were proclaimed, and about two thousand people were arrested.

Punishment of the demonstrators posed a delicate problem. On the one hand, the humiliation of the local authorities cried for revenge;

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on the other, there was the problem of how to present to the public the "unhistorical" fact of a workers' revolt against a "workers' government." The original suggestion to interpret the rebellion in terms of Pilsen's social democratic tradition or as a product of the United States Army presence there in 1945 was brushed aside as inadequate. After a few weeks of hesitation, the party Central Committee Secretariat in Prague came forth with a formula: The rebels were not workers but bourgeois elements dressed up in overalls; thus, the punishment meted out would be a punishment imposed upon the class enemy. Moreover, it was decided that the whole affair should receive as little publicity as possible—no show trials, no draconic sentences. Also, the official terminology applied to the unpleasantness was watered down: what had happened in Pilsen was not an uprising, revolution, revolt or demonstration, but simply "events." The indictments handed down did not charge the offenders with high treason, but with the less serious crimes of "violence against public authorities" (Section 154 of the 1950 Penal Code) and "violence against public officials" (Section 177). The sentences averaged five years of detention. The most severe punishment—fifteen years of penal servitude—was inflicted on a young man who, though not active in the riots, happened to be caught transporting some hand grenades from his bungalow in the countryside to Pilsen.

If the reprisals were not drastic "vertically," there was compensation in the "horizontal approach"—an extremely extensive imputation of guilt. Whoever had been seen in the vicinity of the city hall or the court house was deemed, by his mere presence, to have encouraged the rebels, and was punished accordingly. The rationale behind this policy was clear enough: since in fact those who started and carried out the revolt were members of the working class, it was vital to implicate as many bourgeois bystanders as possible in order to justify the claim that the class enemy alone was to be blamed for the "events." The working class as such was *a priori* exonerated, and the workers who had unavoidably been apprehended in the act of rebellion were punished either as hidden class enemies or as their accessories.

In its search for bourgeois culprits, the party left no stone unturned. A certain Zenkl, for example, allegedly a relative of the prominent émigré politician and former Czechoslovak Vice-Premier Petr Zenkl, was sentenced to four years in jail. The crime: his name. Ludmila Brozova, the ill-famed spinster prosecutor (she represented the state in the well-known political trial in Prague of Jarmila Horakova and others, which resulted in death sentences for the accused principals) even sought to make the trial of the hapless Zenkl a *cause célèbre* linking the rebellion with Washington.

Another victim was Bohumil Ulc, a distant uncle of the writer, who owned a sporting-goods shop in Veleslavinova Street, about two hundred yards' distance from the court house. Because he had remained in his shop and had thus been near the rioting, a sentence of five years was meted out to him.

The ugliest case, however, involved the children of a farmer called Kroupa, originally from a village near Pilsen. Sometime before the riots took place, he had been labeled a kulak, arrested, and sentenced to loss of his property and resettlement with his family in Northern Moravia. It so happened that his two children had come to Pilsen on June 1 to consult with the lawyer who had defended their father. The offices of all defense attorneys were concentrated by that time in a lawyers' cooperative in Sedlackova Street, just around the corner from the court house. The young Kroupas went there not knowing what was going on, and they did not participate in the disturbances in any way. Yet they were put on trial merely because they bore the stigma of being children of a former kulak.

The unfortunate location of the lawyers' cooperative also provided the authorities with a pretext for the arrest and sentencing to prison of one of the cooperative's members, Dr. Hegner, who was particularly disliked by the party. The case of Dr. Hegner, in turn, disqualified all the lawyers in Pilsen from acting as defense counsel in the trials of the rebels—because of a "prejudicial attitude." At the same time, however, Judges Tlapak and Fikerle, who had used firearms in the courthouse rioting, did not excuse themselves from presiding over the trials of those whom they had once tried to shoot down.

Finally, the rebellion served the regime as a good excuse for applying nonjudicial, administrative sanctions against the Pilsen bourgeoisie. Hundreds of families residing in the streets where the demonstrations had taken place were evicted from their homes on eight hours' notice and resettled in the countryside, mainly in the formerly German-speaking border region.

The revolt in Pilsen was thus kept confined to an episode of local character; it never had a chance to succeed, and it brought no tangible positive results. Party policy did not change, but the means of waging the class struggle became even harsher. The injured secret police agents recovered from their wounds, and the only real casualty on the government side was the STB regional commander, Major Balek (an STB major is equivalent in rank to a general in the Army), who was dismissed and made traffic commissioner of the Regional National Committee. Yet, this bizarre and now almost forgotten revolt remains unique in at least one respect: armed with nothing more than their bare fists and a dash of fortitude, the workers of Pilsen ruptured the structure of totalitarian Communist rule in their city. Though only for two days, the party with all its power paraphernalia looked like a paper tiger.

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NOTES & VIEWS

Agriculture: Which Path?

By Janos Horvath

The road to a greater overall national product and increased national income per capita lies without question in industrialization. But the transformation of agriculture is a precondition of industrial advance. Economists point to three distinct major roles which agriculture plays in the transitional process toward industrialization.

First of all, agriculture must supply more food. An expanding food supply is needed to take care of general population growth. Moreover, increased supplies and transfers of food from the rural areas are needed to feed the urban population, which is certain to grow at a disproportionately high rate during the transition to industrialization. And, in most cases, increased agricultural supplies are needed to help meet the foreign exchange bill for capital development: either positively, by earning foreign exchange; or negatively, by minimizing the foreign exchange bill for food imports.

Secondly, expanded demands on agriculture can support the rapid growth of industry. An environment of rising real income in agriculture, rooted in increased productivity, can act as an important stimulus to the establishment of new industrial sectors essential to development. Furthermore, it is from rising rural incomes that increased taxes of one sort or another, necessary to finance the government's role in the transition, can be drawn without creating inflation.

The third distinct function of agriculture in the transitional process is to yield up a substantial part of its surplus income to the modern sector. At the core of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* is his premise that surplus income derived from ownership of land must somehow be transferred out of the hands of those who would sterilize it in prodigal living, and into the hands of productive men who will invest it in the modern sector and then regularly plow back their profits as output and productivity rise.[1] This is precisely what Japan, Russia, Denmark and many other nations did in the last century by initating land reforms in order to increase the supply of capital available for social overhead and essential modernizing processes.[2]

In short, the importance of agriculture for economic development derives from the fact that it must supply increased food, expanded markets, and an expanded supply

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[1] Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, New York, The Modern Library, 1937, Book II, Ch. 3.

[2] W. W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth*, London, Cambridge University Press, 1960, p. 24.

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of loanable funds, all of which are essential to the industrialization process.

It is obvious that transferring the output of one section of the community to another can entail painful sacrifices. Thus, the early years of industrialism have been times of human dislocation and misery. The farming population works to provide the means for expanding the industrial sector. If, during the transitional period, agricultural production remains stable, the living standards of the rural population must fall. Only if agricultural techniques are improving and productivity is rising can the transfer of resources be eased in some measure.

The first nation to industrialize, Britain, was fortunate in having just such a rising productivity in agriculture to ease the transfer. The 18th century was a time of experimentation and advance in English agriculture. Enlightened landowners as well as smallholders joined in developing the "Norfolk system" of crop rotation, which greatly increased farm productivity. The result was that as the Industrial Revolution gathered momentum, there was a growing margin of agricultural production from which savings could be transferred to the ironmasters and the spinners and weavers who were beginning to build British industry.[3]

Japan is another nation in which the transfer of savings from agriculture was mitigated by a sharp rise in agricultural productivity.[4] Indeed, Japan's performance in building a modern economy represents one of the world's most extraordinary successes in industrialization. An overcrowded people living on a small island with almost no mineral resources, the Japanese —acting on their own initiative— modernized their economy within the span of three short decades to become the first truly industrial nation in Asia. Nationalism was certainly one of the motivations which spurred this transformation, but it is an interesting fact that the actual technique adopted by the Japanese in launching their industrialization had as its starting point an extensive land reform and a great drive to increase agricultural productivity. Productivity did, in fact, double between 1870 and 1914. The working farmer had a stake in his land, and his income was increasing. Even though a high percentage of the increased output was transferred, by way of taxation, into industry, a balance remained with the farmer. This he plowed back into his farm, at the same time increasing his own consumption. Labor could be released from agriculture, and the farmers provided a market for consumer goods. Thus, agriculture and industry expanded together.

The acceleration of economic progress in Denmark during the latter part of the 19th century offers a different, yet equally instructive example. It is doubly interesting because Denmark, like many of the underdeveloped countries of today, is small in both size and population, and because its development has been predominantly agricultural rather than industrial.[5] The Danish economy, primarily maritime and agricultural, was given fresh impetus by the adoption of a democratic constitution in 1848. Agricultural development was spurred by the introduction of organizational and technical changes which produced a modern and highly profitable type of agriculture. While grain prices continued their relative decline, it became economical not only to devote arable land to the raising of forage crops for livestock, but even to feed grain to cattle and hogs. Wisely fitting her economy into the new international pattern of specialization in agricultural production, Denmark became a net importer instead of a net exporter of grain and concentrates, while developing dairy farming on a large scale. Dairy farming, moreover, was revolutionized by the invention of the cream separator.

When we look at the Soviet Union, we see the unhappy effects of a quite contrary path of development. Soviet saving has been on a colossal scale, but too much of it has been put into industry and too little into agriculture. The collectivization of agriculture seems to have been designed chiefly to accomplish three purposes: to control the peasant politically; to extract from him a maximum share of his agricultural product; and to channel labor into industry and state service. These would appear to be the plausible reasons why the Soviet government persisted in collectivizing agriculture despite the conspicuous failure of this policy to bring about substantial progress in food production.[6] Otherwise, they would not have taken discriminatory measures against the more efficient agricultural producers— *i.e.*, the wealthy kulaks and medium farmers—during a difficult period of economic transformation. Undoubtedly, political considerations played a key part: the Communist leadership did not want to foster prosperity and independence among the peasants, whose chief desire was to own land as private property. However, the economic effect of the long-continued policy of discrimination against agriculture was to lower the standard of living of the entire Soviet population, both rural and urban.

[3] W. W. Rostow, *British Economy of the Nineteenth Century*, London, Oxford University Press, 1948.

[4] William W. Lockwood, *The Economic Development of Japan. Growth and Structural Change, 1868-1938*, Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1954.

[5] A. J. Youngson, *Possibilities of Economic Progress*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1959, p. 106.

[6] Harry Schwartz, *Russia's Soviet Economy*, New York, Prentice Hall, 1959.

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Nevertheless, for the underdeveloped countries, the Soviet system has a certain appeal as a method of achieving rapid economic development. In its practical application, the system has yielded a rapid rise in industrial production and an expansion of the industrial base for further increases in output. The methods are harsh, but not ineffective. Through the mobilization of the available labor surplus for production and the withholding from the population of any increase in consumption commensurate with the rise in production, capital is, in effect, created out of poverty in a cumulative fashion. To ensure its success, the Soviet system imposes a monolithic state, suppresses democracy and local autonomy, uses political police, and denies the citizen a number of fundamental civil rights.

Having reviewed the essential part which agriculture plays in the process of economic development, let us go on to examine some of the specific problems that appear to be endemic to the Communist system of organizing agriculture.

Prior to World War II, East-Central Europe was generally characterized by extensive agricultural cultivation and an extremely uneven distribution of land ownership, with large estates and dwarf holdings predominating. In Poland and Hungary, about 35 percent of the agricultural population consisted of landless peasants. In 1945, the postwar regimes initiated sweeping land reform measures and began formulating new policies for the future development of agriculture. The predominance of small farms and the high density of the agricultural population pointed in the direction of intensive cultivation. The promotion of labor-intensive crops was seen as a major precondition for increasing national income and raising living standards, and plans were developed to concentrate on horticulture, vegetables, industrial crops, dairy products, and livestock, along the lines of the Danish model. This was considered necessary to ensure the livelihood of the small farmers, who before the war had been obliged to supplement their meager incomes by doing part-time work for the great landowners.

These concepts were so widely held by the East European populations that even the Communist Party, whose domination of the postwar regimes was not yet complete, did not dare to challenge them. Thus, during the period 1945-47, the Hungarian Communists flatly denied that it was their intention to collectivize agriculture. Party leader Matyas Rakosi stated in October 1945:

The new farmers are frightened by rumors that the Communists will establish kolkhozes. . . . We do not want kolkhozes; we want strong, prospering small farms.[7]

Ernö Gerö, then the Hungarian party's chief economist, gave an even more specific assurance in January 1947:

It does not follow from the fact that the Soviet peasant needs the kolkhoz that it is also needed by the Hungarian peasant. The history, customs, and traditions of the Hungarian peasantry differ from the history, customs, and traditions of the Russian peasants. . . . We would be silly and insane if we did not take into account the fact that our peasantry wants to prosper by way of consolidating private property and individual farming.[8]

Following the imposition of totalitarian Communist rule after 1947, however, these pronouncements were quickly forgotten. In Hungary and the other East-Central European satellites, drives to collectivize agriculture soon got under way. The new leaders, trained in Moscow, faithfully and uniformly followed the Soviet example in establishing large state and collective farms, disregarding the fact that their own agricultural situations were quite different from that of the Soviet Union. Hungary, for example, has a population density of 108 persons per square kilometer, as compared with a density of only 10 per square kilometer in the Soviet Union. While extensive farming may be economical for the USSR with its abundant land, as it is on the great plains of the United States, in Australia, or in parts of Argentina, intensive cultivation aiming at maximizing productivity is the most viable type of agriculture for land-poor East-Central Europe. Furthermore, soil and climate conditions in most of this general area are suitable for such intensive forms of agriculture as horticulture and viticulture, whose products would also find ready markets. Such considerations, however, had little influence on the Communist policy-makers, and their decision was for collectivization.

The satellite regimes generally pursued a harsh collectivization policy until 1953, when the "new course" initiated after Stalin's death caused a temporary halt and even permitted the dissolution of some collective farms. In 1955, however, there was a return to the Stalinist line in agriculture, marked by a renewal of the drive for collectivization. The deep hostility of the peasantry toward this policy manifested itself again in Hungary during and after the 1956 revolution. Although the Kadar regime, after being put in power by the Soviet army, sought to revive and maintain the collectives, more than 60 percent of the collectivized farmers chose to return to private farming. It took another five years to force them back into the kolkhozes.

Space limitations do not permit detailed discussion of the zig-zags of collectivization policy in each of the East-Central European countries. The accompanying table, how-

[7] *Szabad Nep* (Budapest), Oct. 16, 1945.
[8] *Szabad Nep*, Jan. 19, 1947.

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ever, will serve to illustrate the impact of this policy on agricultural production in the three advanced countries of Communist East-Central Europe, as compared with the growth of agricultural output in selected non-Communist European countries over the same period of time.

A comparison of the index figures for the 1951-53 period, when collectivization was in full swing, with the prewar indices shows that in all three Communist countries examined, collectivization resulted in decreased agricultural production. Conversely, in the case of Poland, where there has been a marked retreat from collectivization since 1956 (as reflected in the extremely small percentage of land in the public sector in 1963), the return to individual farming has clearly brought a substantial resurgence of agricultural production. On the other hand, in both Czechoslovakia and Hungary, where 90 percent of the land is now in the public or "socialized" sector (*i.e.*, collective or state farms), the growth of agricultural production has been relatively unimpressive. In Czechoslovakia particularly, as the table shows, farm production in 1960-62, exceeded the prewar level by an almost negligible 2.8 percent—notwithstanding all the progress made in agricultural techniques over the intervening decades. The contrast with agricultural growth in non-Communist countries is, of course, much sharper: over the 1955 to 1960-62 period, agricultural production rose by 61 percent in Denmark, 65 percent in Finland, and 75 percent in Greece.

Western specialists on the East-Central European economies have long held the view that the two main reasons for the manifestly poor performance of collectivized agriculture are the lack of incentives and bureaucratic farm mismanagement. Strongly individualistic in character, the Eact European peasant has a natural dislike for the kolkhozes. If he entered a collective, it was usually as a result of direct or indirect coercion by the state, and he was inclined to work less for the collective because his remuneration bore no direct relation to the amount of work he personally put in. Instead, he concentrated his effort on obtaining maximum production from the household plot allotted to him. The East European experience in this respect is by no means unique. As a matter of fact, in the Soviet Union itself, the approximately 3-4 percent of total sown land cultivated by farmers as their own household plots accounts for no less than 30-40 percent of the total Soviet agricultural product.[9] The lack of incentive in the collective sector, moreover, reportedly affects not only the amount of worktime put into production for the collectives, but also the quality of the work performed.

Bureaucratic inefficiency in collective farm management is the second major cause of the poor record of collectivized agriculture. The directors of collective farms, though nominally elected by the members, often are actually chosen by the district party secretary, primarily with political considerations in mind. Such a system may serve political objectives, but it is obviously not conducive to efficient management and hence to economical production on the collective farms.

Today, however, there are numerous indications that the Communist leaders are beginning at long last to break with dogmatism and to admit their costly errors in agriculture. One evidence is the emergence in Hungary of the so-called Nadudvar system of remunerating collective farm members. This represents a significant departure from the established Hungarian system — copied from the Soviet system of *trudodni*—of remunerating kolkhoz members according to officially fixed work norms. The chairman of the Nadudvar collective farm, recognizing that its mem-

Growth of Agricultural Production in Selected Countries

Country	% of land in public sector [1]		Production Indices (1955=100)		
	1955	1963	Prewar	1951-53 mean	1960-62 mean
Poland [2]	17	14	97	95	127
Czechoslovakia	50	90	107	91	110
Hungary	35	90	93	85	106
Denmark					161
Finland					165
Greece					175

[1] Includes both collective and state farms.

[2] Collectivization was never carried as far in Poland as in Czechoslovakia and Hungary; however, prior to 1956, private farmers in Poland were subject to heavy taxation and other discriminatory measures, which have since been considerably relaxed. It should also be noted that the percentage of land in collective farms alone (excluding state farms) dropped from 8.5 percent in 1955 to only 2 percent in 1963. Sources: Tadeusz Choiuk-Celt, "The Effects of Collectivization on Agricultural Production," unpublished seminar paper, 1964; Russett *et al.*, *World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1964.

[9] C. B. Baker and E. R. Swanson, "Agricultural Economics in the USSR," *Illinois Business Review*, June 1964, pp. 6-8; U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Soviet Agriculture Today* (Foreign Agricultural Economic Report No. 13-1), Washington, D.C., 1965, p. 11.

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bers had no interest in putting forth maximum effort for fixed pay, secretly introduced in the mid-1950's a novel system of incentives. It provided for a kind of sharecropping arrangement, with each member of the farm taking over the cultivation of about five acres. In addition to his fixed work-unit wage, the Nadudvar peasant received 20 percent of the crop grown on his assigned land.

Since then the Nadudvar plan has developed from simple sharecropping to the payment of cash incentives amounting to 10 percent of the value of the crop. The results in terms of productivity have been impressive. In 1950, the average yield of wheat at Nadudvar was 9.8 quintals (2,156 lbs.) per hectare (2.5 acres). By 1961 it was 21.8 quintals, and by 1963, 33 quintals, well above the national average.[10] These unquestionable successes have led to the adoption of the Nadudvar plan by a number of other collective farms but not by *all*: the reluctance of orthodox *apparatchiki* to give official sanction to any scheme that smells of "capitalism" still carries the day.

In the Soviet Union also, there has been increasing official recognition that greater individual incentives are a primary requisite for remedying the ailments of Soviet agriculture. Former Premier Khrushchev, for example, declared in a speech in March 1964 that "people who achieve high production results should not simply be listed on a roll of honor; they must be rewarded materially in every way." He also had some barbed remarks for the system of patronage which permitted incompetent kolkhoz directors to move from one managerial position to another in spite of their repeated failures:

I am afraid that when some of you go back home you will start thinking: Now this Ivan Ivanovich has been in key jobs for the last 20 years. Sure, he brought 20 collective farms to ruin, but let's send him to the 21st; maybe something will come of him.[11]

Nor has this recognition of the value of material incentives been merely verbal. Although very cautiously, the Soviet regime has in recent years initiated institutional reforms whereby centrally planned directives can be transmitted to the productive units via economic levers rather than by administrative fiat. Since 1958 steps have been taken toward a system of free sales in which the role of administrative sanctions is replaced by the sanctions of financial profits and losses. As one observer has remarked,

In contrast to the ideas of slightly more than a decade ago, when it was deemed that, under socialism, price could in no way influence output, now price occupies a position of top priority in the arsenal of policy instruments.[12]

Additional evidence of this trend was provided by a recent article in *Pravda*. Its author, L. Kassirov, a graduate economist, urged further steps to "put into action economic incentives that will ensure the further growth of production." "The existing price system," he pointed out, "has certain defects that reduce its effectiveness as an economic stimulus for production."[13]

Soviet recognition of the need for greater incentives in agriculture has also been attested to by gradual changes in the system of remunerating kolkhoz members. In 1952, a substantial percentage of Soviet collective farms distributed no cash whatsoever on *trudodni* earnings, and only 25 percent of the aggregate value of *trudodni* for the whole country was paid in cash. By 1961, however, all kolkhozes were paying at least a part of *trudodni* earnings in cash, and such cash payments accounted for 71 percent of the total.[14] During the last few years many farms have shifted to a 100-percent cash basis. Already by 1963, these represented more than one-fifth of the total number of kolkhozes.

But while recent Communist agricultural policies have been moving in the direction of increased incentives, future developments remain difficult to predict because in a Communist system economic and political objectives are inextricably intertwined. Should economic considerations gain the upper hand on any lasting basis, one could expect the Communist governments to permit farm workers to retain far more of the product of their labor. Thus far, this does not seem to be in the offing.

[10] *The New York Times*, Oct. 25, 1964.

[11] *Ibid.*, March 8, 1964.

[12] Frank A. Durgin, Jr., "Monetization and Policy in Soviet Agriculture Since 1952," *Soviet Studies*, April 1964, p. 375.

[13] *Pravda*, Jan. 22, 1965, p. 2. Quoted from *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Feb. 10, 1965, p. 10. In an editorial addressed specifically to the agricultural problem, *Pravda* (Jan. 5, 1965) admonished farm managers "not to boss, not to rule by fiat, but in every way to develop and support initiative. . . . It is very important that the plan set forth specific measures for raising people's material interest in increasing social production. Each toiler of the countryside should be confident that the better he works and the more effort he exerts, the better he will be rewarded for his work." Quoted from *Current Digest of Soviet Press*, Jan. 27, 1965, p. 14.

[14] Durgin, *op. cit.* Extensive data on this subject are provided by L. Suvarova in "Literatura dene inoi oplate i norirovanii truda v kolkhozakh," *Voprosy ekonomiki* (Moscow), Jan. 1960, pp. 139-45.

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Correspondence

EDITORS' NOTE: Readers are welcome to comment on matters discussed in this journal. Letters should be addressed to the Editors, Problems of Communism, *U.S. Information Agency, 1776 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington 25, D.C. (Please note: Subscription orders or inquiries should be addressed according to instructions on the front inside cover.)*

Who Was Right?

TO THE EDITORS: In the September-October 1964 issue of *Problems of Communism,* there appeared a letter by Academician A. A. Arzumanian in which he explained his refusal to participate in the journal's symposium on consumer welfare in the USSR. In his opinion, *Problems of Communism* is "an organ of the 'cold war' specializing in negative anti-Communist propaganda," and it ". . . avoids objectivity as well as academic standards." One is prompted to ask: On what does Professor Arzumanian base his criticism? Perhaps his objections rest on "The Soviet Consumer—A Discussion," which the journal published in its July-August 1964 issue. This piece consisted of five commentaries by economists, none of whom was wholly in agreement and most of whom pointed out favorable aspects of the Soviet economy. Thus one of them: "If anything, the well-being of the Soviet consumer, as reflected in his purchases of non-food items, has improved and continues to improve significantly," (*Problems of Communism,* July-August, 1964, p. 61).

As for objectivity, one wonders what is the criterion for evaluating the scientific character of the articles published? I suspect that Professor Arzumanian would agree that this criterion is *practice.* ("Practice is the criterion of truth," affirms one of the postulates of dialectical materialism.) If so, then an examination of how the Soviet press and how *Problems of Communism* handled the organizational changes in industry and agriculture is, I think, instructive.

On November 23, 1962, the Plenary Session of the CPSU Central Committee adopted Khrushchev's proposal that two parallel organizations—one for industry and one for agriculture—be substituted for each regional party committee. In effect, this meant the substitution of party committees for the rural district committees then supervising the direction of the *kolkhoz-sovkhoz* production and the industrial zonal party committees. The reform went so far that even the Soviet government councils, the trade union, and the Komosomol organizations were analogically divided.

The Soviet press reacted to these changes the way it always reacts to any change decided upon by the party and the government: with unanimous approval. "The organizational reformation taking place in the party will strengthen the unity of its ranks still more, will expand and consolidate its ties with the workers, peasants and intelligentsia and will enhance the authority of the party . . .," declared *Izvestia* on December 19, 1962. The reform "will make it possible to implement even more successfully the party's decisions calling for a new and mighty upsurge in the productive forces in the period of the full-scale construction of communism," said *Sovetskaia Rossiia* (December 28, 1962)—and so on and so forth.

On November 16, 1964, the plenum of the CPSU Central Committee denounced the reform as a mistake and resolved to restore the former party structure. This decision was based on a report by N. V. Podgorny, First Secretary of the Ukraine Communist Party Central Committee, and one of those who had just two years earlier "approved and supported the reorganization of the national economy set forth by the (22nd) plenary session . . ." (*Pravda,* December 8, 1962). Neither *Pravda* nor any other Soviet publication saw fit to point out Podgorny's complete turn around, or to obtain a statement from him explaining his new stand. Instead, in the criticism of the 1962 reform which followed in the wake of the 1964 plenum, Khrushchev was clearly made the scapegoat for all the difficulties. Thus an article in *Kommunist,* No. 16, 1964, stated:

Our successes in Communist construction, in the developments of agriculture, in the raising of the living standard of the working people would have been more significant had it not been for the fact that during the past few years our economic and cultural construction had been subjected to the negative

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influence of certain organizational measures, which were the result of subjectivism and thoughtlessness (Kommunist, *No. 16, November, 1964*).

The *Kommunist* editorial also affirmed that from the very beginning "some doubts existed concerning the rationality of the measures outlined." Did such doubts really exist? Yes, they did. These doubts, however, were *not* expressed in *Pravda, Izvestia, Kommunist,* or *Voprosy ekonomiki,* but in *Problems of Communism.*

In the January-February 1963 issue, *Problems of Communism* carried a detailed analysis of the Khrushchevian reform. Written by Professor Alec Nove of the University of Glasgow, "Revamping the Economy" contained a number of observations worth recalling today:

It is hard to imagine how these proposals will work out in practice. . . . A party identified closely with production, and split into two parts, might risk losing not only its ideological purpose in life but also its unity of aim. Local officials will speak to the people as industrial or agricultural Communists, not just as Communists. While there have always been special economic departments within the party hierarchy at various levels, the heads of such departments have been clearly subordinate to the territorial first secretary. In a party split from top to bottom, however, local officials might be tempted to pass on to the center the pressures arising from their own areas of responsibility—i.e., *they might come to fight for industry* or *for agriculture, or even for one against the other. Is there not some risk that sectional interest would be substituted for territorial interest?*

Professor Nove's article alone, it seems to me, is a striking example of the scholarly level and analytical accuracy of the materials published in *Problems of Communism;* and if Academician Arzumanian would take the trouble, he would find many similar examples. Indeed, it would be instructive to scan the pages of this and other publications over the past ten years to see how many times Soviet affairs' specialists—usually denounced by Communists as "warmongers," "cold-war specialists," and so on—were proved absolutely right by subsequent developments in the USSR. Had the Soviet economists and political leaders pondered a little over the wisdom of revamping the Soviet economy, and had their conclusions been publicized, the USSR would perhaps have been spared the costly consequences of the experiment.

The 1962 party reform provides us with a telling illustration of the actual spirit of criticism in the Soviet press, of what the phrase "flourishing Soviet democracy" really means ten years after the demolition of Stalin's "cult of personality." As to the Soviet economists whose unenviable task it still is to provide, each and every time, a "theoretical motivation" for the politics of their party and government, it is worthwhile to recall the words by which Marx characterized the early 19th-century bourgeois economic science in England and France: "In place of disinterested inquirers, there were hired prize-fighters; in place of genuine scientific research, the bad conscience and the evil intent of apologetics."

ISAAC ZAHAVY
Israel

On Sociology

The following letter is published exactly as received:

TO THE EDITORS: Do you mind to publish the following:

The articles on Sociology in Eastern Europe in your Jan.-Feb. 1965 issue are noteworthy, although quite "cheap" in one aspect. They give a definite impression that the field of Sociology has become uncovered by these authors, as if nothing had been published about this very field previously. This is becoming more and more popular practice in American scholarship, in order to justify the appearance of the material, now pouring in floods from presses, and also help the acceptance of the material by the editors unaware of the fields covered by specialists.

To be specific, may I point to such studies as: V. V. Mshvenierzdze and G. V. Osipov, "Sociology in the USSR," *Social Sciences Information,* I, 2 (October 1962), pp. 49-73; Leopold Labedz, "Sociology as a Vocation," *Survey,* 47 (July 1963), pp. 57-78; G. Osipov and M. Yovhuck, "Some Principles of Theory, Problems and Methods of Research in Sociology in the USSR," *American Sociological Review,* XXVII, 4 (August 1963), pp. 620-23; etc. Your authors could hide behind the claim that their authorities are based on the native specialists. If that is the case, then there are unaware that these are the "native specialists."

Furthermore, I am wondering about the scholarly abilities of these authors, since they do not appear to be aware that the undersigned has published such studies of this very field as:

Roucek, Joseph S., "Russian Sociology and 'Sociology' Under Communism," pp. 892-921; "Ukrainian Sociology," pp. 933-931; "Soviet Russia's Satellite Europe," pp. 932-978, in Roucek, Joseph S., Ed., *Contemporary Sociology,* Philosophical Library, 1958.

I trust that you will acknowledge the receipt of the letter and indicate also that you will publish this letter. If I shall not hear from you by March 1, 1965, I shall turn this correspondence to my Congressman and our Senators, with the request to look into ways, and the editorial policies of *Problems of Communism,* especially in regard how the editorial policies of this periodical are wasting taxpayers' money.

DR. JOSEPH S. ROUCEK
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Bridgeport, Conn.

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